

THE  
*Compleat Courtier:*  
OR, THE  
MORALS

Of the Famous Historian  
*CORNELIUS TACITUS*  
Concerning Flattery, &c.

In above One Hundred ESSAYS.

Paraphras'd and Illustrated with useful Observations by the *Sieur Ameló de la Houssaie* and *M. D'Ablancourt*:

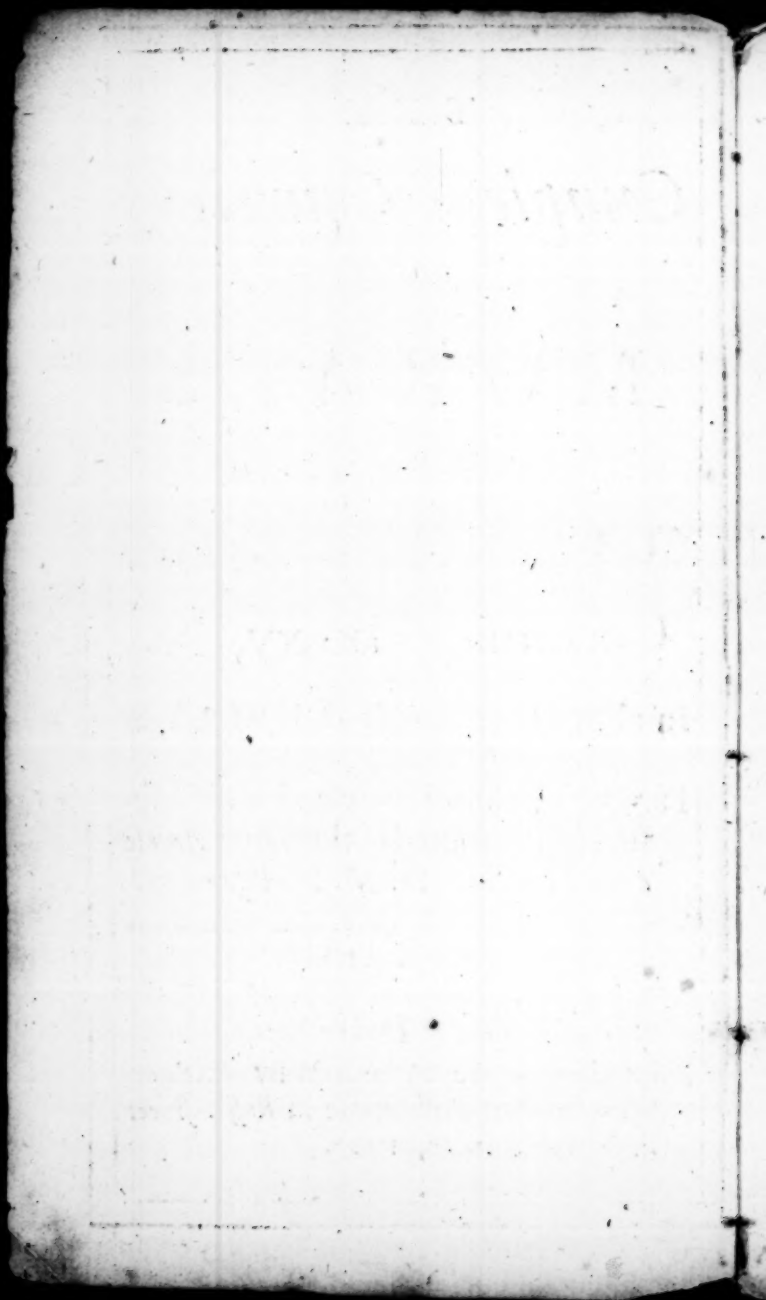
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Done out of French.

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L O N D O N :

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TO THE  
READER.

**I***T was the Judgment of  
the Learned Philip  
Carriana , That a-  
mong all the Latin Histori-  
ans, there was not any one,  
who was to be preferr'd be-  
fore Tacitus, if equall'd to  
him, either for the Solidity of  
his Instructions conducing to  
Civil Life, or for his man-  
A ner*

## To the Reader.

*ner of Concise and Judicious Writing; which is the reason, that all his words are as so many Sentences. There is nothing unprofitable, says he, in his Writings, nothing of Hyperbole, nothing of Circumlocution in his words.*

*The Marquis Virgilio Malvezzi speaks this farther of him, That his History consists in recounting the Actions of Sovereign Princes; and the Benefit that accrues to Us from thence is this,*  
*that.*

## To the Reader.

*that we may learn thereby  
those things which may be of  
great use to us in an Age,  
wherein almost all the Estates  
of the World are under  
Monarchical Government.*

*This Treatise then con-  
tains several Observations  
upon the Choicest Morals of  
that Famous Historian, writ-  
ten in French by the Sieur  
Amelot de la Houssaie,  
Dedicated to Monsieur  
Boucherat, Chancellor of  
France, and Printed with  
the*

## To the Reader.

*the Allowance of that Potent Monarch now Raigning in that Flourishing Kingdom.*

*This is enough to recommend these few Sheets to your Reading ; For tho' the Design may seem to require a larger Epistle, yet I am apt to believe it would be superfluous at such a time as this, when the World is grown weary of long Prefaces ; as also for that all Persons who delight in good Authours,*  
*be*

## To the Reader.

*have too much Sense, to  
be inform'd of the Benefit  
of Tacitus's Morals, and the  
Use which ought to be made  
of them.*

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To the Reader

THESE are the first  
of a new series of  
works published by  
the author.

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( 1 )

*The Modern Courtier :*  
OR THE  
**MORALS**  
OF  
*TACITUS,*  
CONCERNING  
**FLATTERY**  
Lately Reviv'd.

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ESSAY I.

**E**gregious and Sparkling Wits  
are soon discourag'd and de-  
press'd, where Flattery once  
gets Footing and Prospers, *Tacitus*  
*Annal. l. 1.*

The meaning of the Text is, *That*  
*there was no want of Egregious and Spark-*  
*ling Wits, till they were Stupifi'd by Adu-*  
*lation.* D'Ablancourt renders it, *While*  
B *there*

there was no speaking of Truth without a Candid Complacency, Which does not does not sufficiently express the Sence of Tacitus, whose meaning is, that where Flattery Reigns, there follows a decay of Towering Ingenuities, for that all Recompences and Rewards go to the Flatterers. Therefore Monsieur Harlay Chanvalon, has render'd the words much better, thus, till Noble Ingenuities had debas'd themselves by Flattery.

There needs no other Comment upon these words, then that of *Tacitus* himself. Many Authors, saith he, have Compil'd us the History of the Seven First Ages of the Roman Commonweal, at what time they Wrote with no less Freedom then Eloquence: but after it was the Interest of Peace that the Supream Power should be devolv'd upon one single Person, those lofty Genius's were soon Eclips'd. And the Reason was, for that Dominion having depriv'd Equality of all Command, every one strove to please and comply with the Prince, that he might render himself capable of Honours and Preferment, to which he could not ascend, but by the steps of Servitude. For so it is, that Servitude and Flattery are two inseparable Companions: And  
it



it was upon the occasion of the shameful Flatteries of the Senate, that *Tiberius* himself was wont so often to Exclaim: *Poor Souls prepar'd for Slavery.* The younger *Pliny*, whom we shall frequently cite, by reason of the Conformity of his Maxims with those of *Tacitus*, whom he caus'd to examine his Writings, speaking of his Uncle's Books, makes an excuse for eight, which were not wrote in the same Stile, and wanted those Sinews of Eloquence, that gave manly force to all the Rest; because they were Written under the Reign of *Nero*, when the Servile Fears of Men would not permit 'em to write with Freedom. And in one of his Epistles, he adds, That he liv'd in the Reign of another Emperour, when the Senate was become altogether Mute, and meerly Stupifi'd, by reason of long Silence.

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ESSAY II.

**C***Aius* and *Lucius*, the Sons of *Agrippa*, he introduc'd into the Family of the *Cesars*, and them, tho' he made a Semblance of an utter a.

version to any such Design, he most earnestly desir'd to have Proclaim'd, Princes of the Youth, and to be Nominated for Consuls.

*Princes of the Youth; that is to say, Presumptive Heirs of the Empire. D'Ab-lancourt renders it thus. He had Adopted the Sons of Agrippa, Caius and Lucius, and caus'd 'em to be Proclaim'd Princes of the Youth, and earnestly desir'd they might be in Nomination for Consuls, tho' to outward appearance, he testified an extreme unwillingness to have it so.*

Flattery is always the Companion of Advanc'd Fortune. For *Caius* and *Lucius* were no sooner admitted into the Imperial Family, but the Senate and Roman People design 'em for the Empire. And that which is yet more remarkable is this, That these two Princes, who had not as yet assum'd the Robe of Manhood, and consequently were not capable of Publick Employments, were already Consuls Elected by the Senate and People, altho' *Augustus*, out of an Affected Modesty, seem'd so unwilling to give his Consent. But Flattery is ingenious and studious to

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*The Modern Courtier.* 5

Influate ; she devines with ease what it is that Princes desire ; so that let them cover their Longings with never so much Art, she will find out the Secret. And this was that of which *Galba* gave warning to *Piso*, when he us'd this Expression ~~how much ado~~, how Wise, how Resolute, how Constant soever thou may'st be' (Irrumpet Adulatio) Flattery will force thy Modesty ; and make herself Mistress of all thy Affections.

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ESSAY III.

*Nero* was only left of all the Sons in Law : Him all the Popular Adoration Courted.

D'Ablancourt renders it ; *There remain'd no more alive then Tiberius, so that Fortune began to cast an Eye upon him alone.*

While *Marcellus* and *Agrippa*, both *Augustus's* Sons in Law, were alive, as also *Cains* and *Lucius*, the Sons of *Agrippa*, *Tiberius* had much ado to brush off several flights and Scorns, that were put upon him in the Family of *Augustus*, his Father

ther in Law. But when the Palace was empty by the Death of all his Rivals, then he rul'd Lord and Master: All People made their Addresses to him; they took no notice of any Body else; Courted no Body else but only him alone. *Illuc*  
~~*Chancery*~~  
as if *Tacitus* would seem to intimate, that they began even to neglect *Augustus* himself; as it is the Custom of Subjects, more especially Courtiers to adore the Rising Beams, and forsake the Setting Sun. Flattery has been always sway'd by Interest, and Mercenary. When Princes grow in Years, and begin to stoop towards the Grave, Flattery removes her Altars, and offers her Incense to those who are to Succeed, to the end she may be sure betimes to make sure of their earliest Favour and good Opinion. Therefore it was a Sentence of *Galba*, grounded upon good Reason, that *Flattery was void of Love*; and that there was not any Poison more dangerous then hers. And I wish it were the Will of Heaven, that all Princes were as well Convinc'd of this Truth, as *Galba*. Surely it would be much better for the General Prosperity of their Affairs; and their Reputation, of which they can never be too jealous,  
would

would advance it self to a higher Pinnacle of Grandeur. For then they would have Subjects that would adore their Persons, whereas those Many Flatterers that croud about their Thrones, Idolize nothing but their Exalted Fortune. And therefore it was, that *Tiberius* and *Galba* always contemn'd and scorn'd 'em.

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ESSAY. IV.

CONSULS, Fathers, Knights, all ran headlong into Slavery; and by how much the more Illustrious they were, by so much the more Deceitful, and speedy in their Motion: And with a Compos'd Gravity, that they might not seem to be too much overjoy'd at the Death of the deceas'd Emperour, nor sad at such a Conjecture as the Advancement of the Succeeding Prince, they intermix'd their Tears with Joy, and their Lamentations with Adulation.

*At Rome, says D'Ablancourt, all Degrees of Men, Knights, Senators, and*  
B 4 *Con-*

*Consuls, ran headlong into Slavery, and the most Illustrious and Eminent first of all; composing so their Looks and Countenances, that they might not seem joyful for the Death of Augustus, nor sad that Tiberius was come to the Throne. Nevertheless their Tears, their Condolements and Congratulations, were all but cunning Dissimulation.*

Flattery is always Excessive at the beginning of a new Reign: For every one strives to be Complaisant and to advance his Fortune, by Ingratiating himself. Even they themselves, who are not addicted to Flattery, become Flatterers then, spurr'd on by Envy and Jealousie, not enduring that their Competitors should gain a greater ascendant over the Affections of their Prince than themselves, and fearing least Favours should advance their Equals to be their Superiours. The Grandees are oblig'd to Flatter, in regard there is an absolute Necessity for them to please, that so they may be able to preserve their Grandeur. Every Prince at the beginning of his Reign is subject to mistrust, not knowing whither the Great Ones are well pleas'd or disgusted at his Advancement. Therefore it is, that he makes it his business to sound the Affections

ons

ons of his Nobility; and that he studies to observe their Countenances and their Discourses. Which is the Reason that we find all Men in all Companies, striving to outvie one another in Adulation and Servitude.

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ESSAY V.

**V**alerius Messala added, That the Senators should every Year renew their Oaths of Fidelity to *Tiberius*: And being ask'd by *Tiberius*, whether it was by his Order that he had given those hints to the Senate, he answer'd of his own accord, That in those things which Concern'd the Commonweal, he was not wont to follow any other Counsels then his own, not caring whither others were offended or no. That only sort of Flattery then remain'd.

*Says D'Ablancourt, When Tiberius had ask'd him, whither he had given him Orders to speak what he had said, he answer'd, That what concern'd the Republic, he never took*

*advice of any Person. Where he leaves out, Vel cum periculo Offensionis, Wherein chiefly consists undiscernable spurn of absolute Controul, and the disguis'd assertion of Liberty. And besides, he omits the following Sentence, Ea sola species adulandi supererat, Which makes a most graceful and pleasing Epiphonema to what went before.*

The Question which *Tiberius* put to *Messala*, plainly shews, that there are certain Flatteties, which are so far from being grateful to Princes, that they rather blush and are asham'd to hear 'em pronounc'd. But from one piece of servile Flattery, which had wounded *Tiberius's* Modesty, *Messala* drives on to another, which under the false appearance of a Bravado, and an undaunted Courage, concludes in the Absolute Annihilation of Liberty. For while he feigns as if he thought *Tiberius* offended with his Advice, as one that really was resolv'd never to take upon him the Burthen of the Empire, he maintains by his Reply, That it was not the Power of the Empire to excuse Him, and by Consequence, that there was a compulsive necessity for Him to accept of the Sovereign Power  
maugre,



maugre his aversion to the Contrary protesting that he would rather incur the Princes Indignation, then be debarr'd from speaking freely whatever he thought might be for the Service of his Country.

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ESSAY VI.

**T**HE Fathers unanimously cry'd out, that the Body should be carry'd to the Funeral Pile, upon the Shoulders of the Senators.

*D'Ablancourt renders it, Then the Senate cry'd out, that it was but decent for the Body to be carry'd to the Funeral Pile upon the Shoulders of Senators.*

There needs but one Flatterer to infect a whole Society. *Messala* had no sooner deliver'd his fawning Opinion, but the whole Senate are for improving and striving to outvye his glozing Dissimulation. *Messala* had spoken like a Colloguing Courtier, and the Senate speaks like so many abject Slaves: For it was a Duty incumbent only to the Slaves to carry the Bodies.

Bodies of their Masters to the Funeral Pile.

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ESSAY. VII.

NOR were the Fathers less Prodigal of their Adulation toward *Augusta*. But *Tiberius* told 'em, there was a Moderation to be us'd in bestowing Female Honours.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Their Flattery was not only excessive toward the Emperour, but also towards his Lady.*

Princes are willing enough that Honours should be bestow'd upon their Mothers, or their Kindred; but they cannot endure that any Person whatever, should be made their Equal. But this was that which the Senate were about to do, when they decreed that glorious Title of MOTHER OF HER COUNTRY to *Livia*. For indeed Flatterers are strongly subject to one piece of Imprudence, for that as they are a sort of People, that make their Interest the only Idol of their Adulation, looking one way but

but rowing another, they never measure their study'd Encomium's according to the Merit, or Quality, or Dignity of the Person, but give the same Panegyricks to a Judge, a Chancellor, a President, or an Earl, &c. as to a Sovereign Prince. And thus we find at this day several Illustrious Epithites, whither before large Folio's, or Plays, or Discourses upon mean and frivolous Subjects, which are allowable to none but Kings and absolute Princes. Which is the Reason that *France* now mainly stands in need of a PRAGMATIC Sanction, like to that which *Philip* the II. set forth in the Year 1586. to prevent Abuses of the same Nature. As for Women, *Tiberius* like a Politic Prince, well understood how dangerous a thing it was to raise their Pride, their Vanity, their Luxury, their Avarice, their Ambition, their Insolence, and their Cruelty, which according to *Tacitus*, are the usual Passions incident to their Sex. And this Maxim of *Tiberius*, is well observ'd in *Hungary*, where the Queens, at the Ceremony of their Coronation, are never Crown'd but upon the Shoulders, to let 'em know that the Kingdom has no need of their Heads, the King's being altogether sufficient for the weight of Government.

## ESSAY VIII.

THE Name of Father of his Country, frequently by the People crouded in among his Titles, *Tiberius* refus'd; Nor would he permit any Oaths to be Sworn for the Observation of his Acts, alledging that all the Acts of Mortal Men were frail and uncertain, and the more he was advanc'd in Power, the more slippery was the Pinacle upon which he stood.

*He excus'd himself, says D'Ablancourt, by urging the Inconstancy of Human Events, affirming that the higher he was Exalted, the more dangerous would be his Fall, and the more likely to happen.*

Nothing better becomes a Great and Glorious Prince, then to withstand the assaults of Flattery. The Senate had decree'd, that all the Acts of *Tiberius* should be Sworn to; that is to say, that they should be bound to Confirm and Justifie,

stifie, whatever he did to be Legally and Warrantably done. But *Tiberius* was of a contrary Opinion; that he was so far from being Infallible, that he was more then others in danger of Failing in his Judgment, for that his High Employment, and the Burthen of the Ponderous Charge upon his Shoulders, was not only more difficult then any other to undergo, but more Obnoxious also to Human Accidents.

Princes have always been accustom'd to have Flatterers at their Elbows, who Swear continually to all their Acts; Insinuating that God has given 'em a Universal Knowledge, and a Judgment that cannot err. So that we must not wonder if so many Princes miscarry in their Government, for want of Faithful Servants that will open their Lips to tell 'em Truth. Therefore a Politic *Spaniard*, giving the Reason why it was the Custom for many Princes to carry their Jester along with 'em where ever they went: \* Because, says he, they were Wise and Prudent Men; for they did not make use of those Jesters for Sport or Diver-

\* *Gracian* in his 3d. Dialogue of his 3d. Part of his *Criticcon*.

tisement, but for Information. *And in another Place*, † These Jesters, says he, are the Oracles of Truth, who fearlessly discover what others have unwarily utter'd in their Hearing.

Which is a great Assistance to Princes, who never can Correct the Fault before they know it.

† In his *Ferdinand*.

## ESSAY IX.

**T**HE Tribunes and Centurions reported oft'ner what was grateful to the Ear than what was true: The Freedmen still retain'd a twang of their former Slavery: Friends were all addicted to Flatter: But 'twas his business to know the inside of the Soldiers Hearts, when alone and thinking themselves secure, they freely imparted their Hopes and Fears at their Military Meals.

*D' Ablancourt renders the whole thus: For that the Tribunes and Centurions made their reports rather as things were wish'd to be,*  
t hen

then according to Truth. That the Freedmen still retain'd a smatch of their former Slavery, and treacherous Friendship only Flatter'd. He resolv'd himself therefore to discover what he was uncertain to know by any other Information, and to penetrate the Minds of the Soldiers, when retir'd in their Tents, and familiarly discoursing over their Military Commons, they display'd the naked verity of their Hopes and Fears.

Germanicus it seems one night took his Opportunity to walk in Disguise and unattended through every Street of his Camp, and stopping at every Tent, heedfully Listen'd to the familiar Discourses of the Soldiers. Several great Princes have observ'd the same Method, to make those Discoveries themselves, which they were certain others conceal'd from their Knowledge. The Spanish Author last Quoted (in his *Ferdinand.*) says very pertinently, That Charles the V. was become the Spie of his own Reputation. And that Francis the I. having spent a whole Night in the Dwelling of Simplicity, that is to say, in the Country among the Vulgar Hinds, discovered so many Things of high Imporoance to his Government, that he was often wont to repeat this saying, He had been lost,

*lost, unless he had been lost ; as he rode a Hunting. In like manner might he as well have said what the Great Antiochus utter'd, upon his having been in a little Cottage, where he Discours'd with several poor People that knew him not, That he had never heard Truth spoken till then. And the same Author adds, If it be so difficult for a private Man to know himself, what a Task must it be for a King ? While Self-Love will not permit to know himself ; nor, Flattery to know others. Princes have no Mirrours, and therefore must make use of their own Industry. So then, there cannot be a more Beneficial piece of Industry to be their own Perdu's, when Men are discoursing over their Trenchers and Cups, with free and open Hearts ; for then it is that they give their Tongues and Jocund Humours the liberty to Range ; while Precaution and Reserv'dness are laid aside.*



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ESSAY X.

**T***iberius* rejoyc'd to hear the Senate argue for the Laws against his Sons.

*D'Ablancourt renders it, Tiberius was glad to see his Sons, in that same famous Dispute, made equal with the Laws.*

What a strange thing Flattery is ! The Dispute was about the Election of a Pretor ; for which Office there were several that stood. *Drusus* and *Germanicus*, the Sons of *Tiberius*, favour'd a Kinsman of their own, whereas the Roman Law preferr'd those who had the most numerous Issue. However , notwithstanding the Election was hotly bandy'd and oppos'd by the Senate, yet Favour at length carry'd it above the Law. Which is no more then what happens every day in other Courts. However let Princes be never so Vertuous and Moderate, yet they always take delight to prefer their Authority above the Laws, while it gives them the Opportunity of reaping to them-

themselves the sole Glory of submitting afterwards. Thus it was that *Tiberius* one day Depress'd himself, to advance the high Opinion of his Moderation, returning in answer to the Flattery of a Senator, That the Customes of a Country prudently Establish'd, and with which the People had always all along been satisfi'd, were not to be Chang'd, but upon mature and deep Premeditation: That Princes had too much Business already, and too much Power: That while they labour'd to advance and extend their own, they did but weaken the Authority of the Law. Lastly, That there was no need of Application to a Prince, when the Laws were sufficient to reform the Grievance. Here by the way we must observe, that in Republic's they say, The Laws are above Princes: But in Monarchies, Reason of State requires that the Prince should be above the Laws: I speak of Hereditary Monarchies; for in Elective Monarchies, the Laws are Superiour to the Prince, as in *Germany* and *Poland*, where the Government is Aristocratico-Monarchical.

ESSAY XI.

**H**E sharply reprehended those who gave the Epithite of Divine to his daily Employments, and gave him the Title of LORD.

*Says D'Ablancourt, He severely reprov'd those who call'd him Lord, and gave his daily Exercises the Epithite of Divine Occupations.*

There are some Flatterys, that render Princes Odious. *Tiberius*, who was hated enough already, had been much more Contemn'd, had he accepted of a Title, which *Augustus*, whose Example had always with him the force of a Law, had refus'd by a Decree. And for that reason it was that he thunder'd out his Indignation against Those, who call'd him LORD. He was a Lord in Reality, but he would not that People should call him so, as being desirous they should believe he did not look upon himself so to be. Politic Princes are contented with the Substance of their Power, and willingly part with all the rest as meerly Super-

Superfluous. For Subjects are almost all of the humour of that same *Parthian* King, who was nothing troubl'd that his Brother bore the Yoke of Roman Servitude, so long as he did not wear the Scars and Marks of it. The greater Progress *Tiberius* made in taming the Senate with the vain shew of Liberty, the more he enlarg'd and establish'd his Power. The more Popular his Words and Actions were, the more plyable he found the Great Men, and the more easily led to Servitude. He was offended with those who call'd his Occupations, *Divine*; for because he knew himself not undeservedly to be tax'd with the Common Stain of his Family, which was Haughtiness, he was desirous that the People should believe he went hand in hand with the Senate in the Government. *I know, said he, that I am but a Mortal Man, and subject to all the Frailties of Humanity, and therefore 'tis enough for me to be Honour'd with the first Seat in the Senate, and more then enough if I supply it well.*—

Princes are Mortal, but the Commonwealth is Eternal. By this acknowledgment he was no more then a Member, and he permitted those Honours that were pay'd him no otherwise, then as they were ascrib'd to the rest of the Senators.

Who

Who though they gave little Credit to what he said, yet were they pleas'd to hear him deliver himself with so much Modesty, so much the rather because it was not always his luck to be Popular for all that. Observe moreover, that by the Difference which he made between Princes as Mortals, and Commonwealths as being Eternal, he seem'd to intimate, that he was so far from being LORD of the Empire, that he had little Concern in the Government of it; only his Eternity resided in the Body of the Senate, which was Immortal, and was able alone to shake the Affairs of the Universe.

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ESSAY XII.

WHO fear'd Liberty, yet hated Adulation.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Under a Prince who hated Flattery, yet was no friend to Liberty.*

To hate Flattery is to love Liberty; to hate Liberty, is to love Flattery. Nevertheless *Tiberius* hated both the one  
and

and the other. A strange thing, says *Tacitus*, that a Prince who left remaining not the least Footstep of Liberty, should be tir'd and discontented to behold in the Senate, such an Effeminate and Servile Complacency. Certainly 'tis a very difficult thing to find the way how to please the Palate of a Politic Prince. If you Flatter him continually, you incur his Contempt; if you deal too frankly and freely with him, you meet his Indignation. How Vertuous soever he be, too much Liberty offends him; because it appears not so respectful as Flattery. And if they are wickedly enclin'd, Flattery then becomes suspected; because her Encomiums are oftentimes the Reproaches of Vices, which are opposite to Vertue. Therefore had *Tacitus* reason to say, that a Man has enough to do, who has to deal with a Prince that understands what Flattery is. For which reason it was an Ingenious and Witty saying of the Countess *D'Aranda*, that there was no Register in the Heart of a King, and by consequence it was not to be read. Moreover Princes find greater Benefit by Liberty, then Flattery, as being deluded by one, but instructed by the other. But Courtiers take the surer Course to attain  
their

their ends by Flattery, then by Liberty of Speech ; while the one is grateful, the other odious to the Generality of Great Personages.

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ESSAY XIII.

THE same undistinguish'd Lamentations among all: an intermix'd and confus'd Throng of Mourners, and every one Weeping at their own rate. There could be no Adulation there, while all Men knew that the Death of *Germanicus* was welcom to *Tiberius*.

D'Ablancourt says, *That it was no formal Funeral Pomp, or study'd Mourning, to gratifie Tiberius, who they knew was well pleas'd with the Death of Germanicus.*

The Common People are not capable of Dissimulation, nor by consequence of Flattery. For when *Tiberius* outwardly bewail'd the Death of *Germanicus*, they were so far with Complying with his inward Joy, that they sought to spite him

C

by

by all the Demonstrations of a Public and Real Lamentation imaginable; and celebrating the praise of the Deceas'd. And indeed there has been in all Times, a certain kind of Antipathy between the Prince and the People. They who are hated by the Prince, are generally belov'd by the Multitude. On the other side, they who are the Darlings of the People, are never favour'd by the Prince. *Germanicus* was mortally hated by *Tiberius*, because he was the Peoples Favourite; and the People had an Antipathy against *Drusus*, because *Tiberius* had a greater kindness for him, then for his Brother. The People ador'd *Agrippina*; *Tiberius* persecuted her to Death. When the Wife of *Drusus* lay Inn of two Male Infants, *Tiberius* could not contain his Joy, nor the People their sorrow. Because the Reinforcement of *Drusus's* Family weaken'd and depress'd the Family of *Germanicus*. But when *Drusus* dy'd, the People were overjoy'd to hear the Emperours Lamentations, in hopes the Family of *Germanicus*, against whom his Father had all along display'd his Enmity, would now revive and flourish in its former Glory.



## E S S A Y. XIV.

**H**E nam'd *Manias Lepidus*, and *Junius Blesus*, to choose which of the two they pleas'd to be sent *Proconsul* into *Africa*. *Lepidus* excus'd himself by reason of the Crazie Constitution of his Body, and for that he had a Daughter ready to be Marry'd: But there was another Reason which was Conjectur'd at by all, tho' by him not so much as mention'd, which was, that *Blesus* was Uncle to *Sejanus*, and therefore assur'd of the Preferment: *Blesus* also refus'd the Proffer, but not with that Fervency and Sincerity as the other did, nor was he so much Applauded by his Flatterers, who were also the same that flatter'd *Sejanus*.

D'Ablancourt says, That *Lepidus* ground-  
ed his refusal upon his Indisposition of Body,  
alleging besides, that he had a Daughter  
to Marry; but that there was another Rea-

son which he durst not discover ; because his Rival was Uncle to Sejanus, and therefore would be sure to be preferr'd before him. Blesus also made a refusal ; but not with half that Earnestness, nor so loudly Applauded by those that flatter'd him.

When *Tiberius* propos'd *Lepidus* and *Blesus* to the Senate, he propounded a Choice between Merit and Favour. *Lepidus* was a Person of Merit, as being a Person whom *Augustus* had adjudg'd worthy and fit to Govern the Empire. But *Blesus* was the Favourite, as being Uncle to *Sejanus*. *Tiberius* nam'd *Lepidus* in the first place, seemingly designing to give the Precedency to Merit ; but he knew well, that Flattery would bequeath it to Favour. The excuses which *Lepidus* alledg'd were receiv'd with Applause and Acclamation, as being no less grateful to *Tiberius*, then to *Sejanus* and *Blesus*. But the excuses which *Blesus* produc'd could not be heard ; while every one knew there was a willing force design'd to engage him to acceptance. For Favour and Flattery go hand in hand together ; they never part Company, attended by Injustice that follows close at their Heels.

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ESSAY XV.

**C***estius* the Senator discours'd,  
That Princes indeed were like  
the Gods, but that neither Gods  
bow'd down their Ears to the unjust  
Supplications of their Adorers.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Cestius declar'd, That  
Princes were like the Gods, but that the Gods  
never listen'd to Prayers that were unjust.*

Princes are oftentimes compar'd to  
God; and indeed they may be said to be  
Corporeal Gods; according to that of  
*Vegetius*, *There is a faithful Devotion to be  
paid to the Emperour, as to our present and  
Terrestrial God.* God himself also gives  
them the same Title, *I have said ye are  
Gods.* But the Illustrious and Cælestial  
Title should put 'em in remembrance of  
their Principal and God-like Office, which  
is to distribute Justice to their Subjects,  
and prevent the Oppression of the Poor.  
'Tis a usual thing for them that Kneel at  
their Feet for Favours and Preferments,  
to tell 'em they are absolute in Power,  
C 3 and

and that they are the Images of the Almighty: But for the same reason, they are oblig'd to take care that all their Grants be just, for fear of defacing that same glorious Similitude. 'Tis a great Weakness in a Prince to be so timorous, as not to dare justly to deny what others dare demand without regard to Justice. Certainly, that King spoke like a Virtuous Prince, who being press'd to keep an Illegal Promise, reply'd, That 'twas impossible he should ever have made an Unjust Promise. Thus *Charles* the V. being inform'd that he had sign'd a Grant that was contrary to Equity, sent for it again, and after he had tore it, *I love my Soul*, said he, *much better then my Writing.*

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## E S S A Y XVI.

**D**olabella Cornelius, while he strove to outvie the rest, stumbled into a most absur'd piece of Flattery, and Decreed, that he should make an *Ovant* entry into the City, returning from *Campania*.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Dolabella desirous to surpass all others, fell into a Ridiculous piece of Flattery, proposing to decree Tiberius the Honour of a Petty Triumph.*

Could there be a more Impertinent piece of Flattery then this, to decree a Triumphant Entrée to a Prince, meerly upon his Return from a bare Progress? But *Tiberius* had too much Wit to be in the humour to accept of such an Honour, which had render'd him more ridiculous then the Curry-Favour that decreed it him. *I am not so indigent of Honour*, said he to the Senate, *after having Tam'd so many Warlike Nations, and receiv'd and refus'd so many Honours in my Youth, as in my Declining Age to beg a Counterfeit Tri-*

C 4

umph

*umph for a Journey of Pleasure almost within view of Rome it self. Princes that have acquir'd a substantial Reputation, as Tiberius had done, in the East, in Germany and Pannonia, or Hungary, scorn all false Honours: And to flatter 'em, is to incur their Displeasure; because their Renown has no need of borrow'd Augmentation. When their Praises flow from the Lips of Flatterers, they become suspected; for it is with Flatterers as with Lyars, whom no body believes, even when they speak Truth. So that Princes have the greatest reason to abhor their vain Idolizers, who rob their Vertue of more true Glory, then the Sophisticate Honour comes to, so sedulously prepar'd for a false and unseasonable Glitter.*

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## ESSAY XVII.

**O**Nly *Rubellius Blandus* held with *Lepidus*; the rest all sided with *Agrippa*.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Of all the Consular Senators, only Rubellius Blandus was of Lepidus's Opinion? the rest condemned Priscus to Death.*

*Agrippa*

*Agrippa* had adjudg'd to Death a certain Roman Knight accus'd to have cheated *Tiberius*, in presenting him an Elegie upon the Death of *Germanicus*, which he had made for *Drusus*, who was recovered from a Disease, of which 'twas thought he would have dy'd. *Lepidus*, according to his Custom, which was to moderate the rigour of severe Sentences, insisted, that the mild Temper of the Prince, and the Example of their Ancestors, would not admit that they should run to that Heighth, as not to make a distinction between Words and Actions; and that Ostentation was not to be punish'd as a Criminal Offence: That they might find out such a Medium, so that the Offender might be punish'd, and yet they have no occasion ever to repent of too much Clemency, or too unwary Severity. That a Man who made it his study to write Verses and read 'em to Women, to acquire the reputation of being a Poet, was neither in a Capacity to do the Public any harm, if they suffer'd him to live; nor considerable enough, to be made an example of Terrour, if they put him to Death, and therefore that it was sufficient to Banish him, and Confiscate his Estate. But this Prudent and Grave

Advice had but one only Person to applaud it; while *Agrippa*, tho' his Opinion and Intentions were unjust, had all the rest of the Voices of his side, because he flatter'd the Inclinations of the Prince, who was both cruel and greedy of Revenge. One Flatterer makes many, while they are afraid to be less forward than He, to support the Prince's Interests, if they do not side with that Opinion which flatters most.

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## ESSAY XVIII.

**H**E spoke Modest Things concerning the Manners of the Young Man, nor did he add any thing of untruth to set a higher value upon his Parts.

*Says D'Ablancourt, He added something, as to Drusus, but without Flattery.*

When *Tiberius* mention'd *Germanicus*, to whom he bare a particular Spleen and Envy, he spar'd for no Words, nor no Applauses, because he Flatter'd him, and was willing the Senate should believe he said



said more then he meant. But when he spoke of *Drusus*, who was his own Son, he was always thrifty of his Expressions, as being desirous they should believe all that he said; as indeed he never did speak any thing of him but what every one knew to be Truth. Behold here the difference between Praising and Flattering. To Praise, is truly to declare the real Worth and Merits of any Person and no more: Whereas he who Flatters, either Aggravates, or Lyes. He that Aggravates, attributes more to the Person then he deserves: And he may be said to Lye, who gives to Vices the appellation of Vertues, that are their Opposites, as it is the custom of all that Flatter.

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E S S A Y   X I X.

**T**HE Fathers had study'd his Oration before hand; so that the Flattery was the more finely Spun.

*Says D'Ablancourt, The Senators waited for this Request, which render'd the Flattery more delicate.*

If Flattery be generally so futtle and Ingenious as it is, what is there which it is not able to invent to shew her Complacency, after a serious Meditation? If she be so pliant and submissive, when her Acts are unconstrain'd and voluntary, to what a low degree of Pusillanimous Baseness will she not condescend and poorly stoop, when once necessity and awful force compel her?

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## E S S A Y XX.

**M.** *Silanus*, in contempt of the Consulship, labour'd for the Honour of the Princes, and deliver'd it, as his own Opinion that the Names of the Consuls should be no longer affix'd to Public or Private Acts, as the Rule of Kalenders and Chronologies, but the Names of those that had the Tribunitial Power. But as for *Quintus Haterius*, when he propos'd that the Decrees of the Senate for that day, should be set up in the Court in Letters of Gold, the Old Man became the Laugh-

Laughter of the whole Court, who having so small a time to Live, could think of carrying the Infamy of such a notorious piece of Flattery to his Grave.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Haterius expos'd himself to public Laughter, for having propos'd to Engrave their Decrees in Letters of Gold, as one that could not hope to reap the fruit of his Flattery, but the Ignominy that attended it.* But this does not come up to the sense of *Tacitus*, who the better to set out the poor Spirit of *Haterius*, tells us, that he was an Old Man, who by Consequence not having long to live, could expect no other, then to go to his Grave loaden with Infamy.

The same thing happen'd to *Tiberius*, which had befallen *Augustus*. When *Augustus* made *Tiberius* his Associate in the Tribuneship, then thither *Cuncta Vergere*. The Flatterers began to pay their Adorations all to *Tiberius*: And so soon as *Tiberius* summons *Drusus* to Partnership in the Dignity and Authority, every one strives to adore the Rising Sun, all the Flatterers; all the Senators like Emulous Cham-

Champions, dispute for Preheminence in Flattery, and to gain the Favour of the New Prince, generally the Prize of early Sedulicie. *Silanns* therefore, a person Illustrious for his Extraction and Eloquence, steps up, and proposes that the Public Accounts of the Years should be no longer taken from the Names of the Consuls, but from the Sovereign *Tribuneship*, little heeding that while he Honour'd *Drusus*, he Dishonour'd *Tiberius*, who having been four times Consul, receiv'd the same Affront as the rest of the Consuls, if he suffer'd a Dignity to grow into Contempt, which he himself had taken upon him, after he was Emperour. Besides, that if the Alteration of Chronological Computation should Commence from no longer a Date then the Tribuneship of *Drusus*, he must be Inferiour to his Son; or at least be beholding to him for being Nam'd with Him in all Public Acts and Registers: Which is a Thing highly injurious to Majesty, that endures neither Equality nor Dependency. And thus see how Flattery oft-times splits it self upon the Rocks of Imprudence, and becomes Affrontive where she studies most Obsequiousness. As for *Quintus Haterius*, his Flattery was so ill resented by  
*Tiberius,*

*Tiberius*, that his Proposal was look'd upon as Extravagant. And that which render'd him most ridiculous, was his Old Age, that put him out of hopes of ever living to reap the Fruit of *Drusus's* acknowledgement ; so that there nothing more remain'd for him, but the ignominy of having been the Author of a Proposal so much beneath a Person of his Years and Quality: for he was of an Illustrious Family, and moreover highly esteem'd for his Eloquence. Whence you may observe by the by, that Eloquence and Flattery wonderfully sympathize one with the other ; and that it is a difficult thing to be a cunning and dextrous Flatterer without Eloquence ; or to be Eloquent without Adulation. And this is that perhaps, which the younger *Pliny* means, That Eloquence is not to be learnt, without good Manners ; to let us understand, that Eloquence is a dangerous Talent in them, who are not endu'd with a Sincerity capable to make a right use of it.

## E S S A Y XXI.

**I** Think it to be the chiefest Duty of a Historian, to take care that Vertue be not smother'd, and to deter Men from evil Actions and Sayings, for fear of being branded with Ignomy to Posterity.

*In my Opinion, says D'Ablancourt, 'tis the Duty of a Historian, to give to Vertue the recompence which she deserves, and to beget an abhorrency of Vice, by awing Men with the shame of Eternal Infamy.*

It is the custom of Flatterers to extol Vice, while by a wrong impression of Interpretation, they make it pass for currant Vertue; and to cry down as Crimes, the Vertues of such as are hated by those Princes whom they Flatter. Of all People therefore in the World are Flatterers the most unfit, and improper to undertake a History, which ought to have Truth for its Guide, and for its Object the Instruction of Posterity. And here we must not omit to give that worthily

thily deserved Character of *Monsieur Mezeray*, to be the only Modern Author, that has honour'd *France* with a Sincere Story, and left in his Writings the lively Image of its ancient Liberty.

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ESSAY. XXII.

**E***nnius* a Roman Knight, accus'd of High-Treason, because he had melted down the Princes Statue, and turn'd it into Silver Plate, *Cesar* forbad to be Register'd among the Guilty; *Aseius Capito* openly opposing him under the Pretence of Liberty, alledging that such a Hainous Crime ought never to go Unpunish'd; that he might be remiss in pard'ning Offences against himself; not be so lavish to forgive notorious Injuries done the Public.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Ennius a Roman Knight was accus'd of High Treason, for having melted a Statue of the Prince, to change it into Silver Plate for his own use. But Tiberius discharg'd him; tho' Capito oppos'd*

*oppos'd him, crying out as if he had stood up in defence of the Public Liberty, that it became him not to let so great an Offender go Unpunish'd; that he might Pardon his own, but not the Injuries of the Commonwealth.*

Flattery is never more wicked, then when she disguises her self in the habit of Liberty. *Capito* was not to learn that *Tiberius* hated Flattery, and that on the other side he was no Friend to Liberty; and therefore he intermixes both together. *What?* says he, will you let go a Criminal, that has thus daringly display'd his contempt of your Person, by melting down one of your Statues; and had this Offence been committed against You alone, you might have pardon'd it, and the Senate could not have oppos'd it; but since it is a Crime that *Ennius* has committed against the whole Republic, the Punishment belongs to Us; since it is not just that you should be so merciful at the Expence of our Authority.

Certainly no piece of Flattery could ever have out-done this Reprimand. *Capito*, who was not ignorant of the cruel Temper of *Tiberius*, would insinuate that all the Injuries done to the Prince, should be look'd upon as done to the Commonwealth; to the end that under that specious



ous pretence, while the Senate satisfi'd the Emperours Revenge, *Tiberius* might be discharg'd of the *Odium* which was like to fall upon him, had he been Carver for himself. Thus Sycophants cherish and foment the Vices of Princes, and teach 'em how to be Tyrants. Observe by the way, that this *Capito* was a Person highly learn'd in the Laws, both Human and Divine, and moreover accounted one of the Chief Men in the Senate, yet all his Learning serv'd but to stain his Reputation with Eternal Reproach; considering the ill use which he had made of it, as well under *Augustus* as under *Tiberius*. *There are always at the Elbows of Princes,* says *Commines* in his *Memoires*, l. i. c. 6. *some or other of the Long Robe; a lovely sight, when Vertuous; but dangerous, when Wicked.* And in his Fifth Book, toward the end of the Chapter, *Too much Knowledge corrupts the Wicked; but the Vertuous are much the better for it.*

## ESSAY XXIII.

**L**abeo, an untainted Asserter of Liberty, and for that Reason, of a more celebrated Reputation; but Capito's Obsequiousness was more approv'd by those that had the Sovereign Power.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Labeo more Frank and Generous, and therefore more Famous among Men, the other more Complaisant, and better belov'd by his Prince.*

I have already said, that how Vertuous soever Princes may be, they are unwilling however to suffer absolute Liberty: Whatever their aversion may be to Flattery, yet too much Freedom is that which more offends their Ears. Majesty is so accusom'd to Respect and Adoration, that whatsoever is not Complaisance or Submission, proves insupportable to it. *Augustus* was a mild and vertuous Prince, but yet he never lov'd *Labeo*, because he did not seem to demean himself as became him, like a Subject; therefore he

he preferr'd *Capito*, his Competitor, tho' his inferiour in Birth, in Merit, and in Honesty, only surpassing him in Complaisance. *Labeo* was more esteem'd by all the World, and *Capito* more valu'd by his Prince. *Labeo* deserv'd the Consulship but never had it; *Capito*'s Advancement was early to the same Dignity; tho' no otherway deserv'd it then by his Cringing Obsequiousness. *Labeo*'s Humour gains a Reputation among the People, but he who strives to be a Favourite at Court, must observe the Method that *Capito* follow'd; according to the Court Maxim, That Favour acquir'd is more durably preserv'd by Complaisance, then by Courage.

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ESSAY XXIV.

**A** Dulation and Pride kept equal pace together.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Servile and Proud both together.*

Flatterers (I mean the Flatterers in Courts of Princes) are for the most part  
Tainted

Tainted with two sorts of Vices, which seem however to be contrary to each other ; that is to say, Servility and Pride. They are flexible pliant, and obsequious to their Prince, but arrogant and haughty toward their Inferiours. And this was the meaning of *Tacitus*, where he says, that *Mucianus* was an Intermixture of Affability, and Arrogance : And of what the Orator *Passienus* said of *Caligula*, who had been a most Servile Flatterer of *Tiberius*, that there was never known a better Slave nor a worse Master. *Plutarch* also records in *Sylla's* Life, That he always humbled himself to those with whom he had to do ; but expected Adoration from those that had to do with him ; so that it was hard to say of him, which of the two were his chiefest Excellency, his Flattery, or his Pride.

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## ESSAY XXV.

**T**Hose that were too lavish of their Flatteries, He himself restrain'd and reprov'd.

Says D'Ablancourt, *And if any suffer'd them-*

*themselves to run into high-strain'd Flattery, those the Prince was the first that reprehended.*

This was the True means to preserve himself from being mislead. For it is with many Princes, as with Women that are given to tell Stories, that their Ears are too open to the Charms of pleasing Impertinents. If Flatterers never open'd their Lips, Princes would never be misguided, for Verity would take place of Untruth. For this Reason it was, that the prudent Senator *Helvidius*, delivering his Opinion concerning the Deputies which the Senate had resolv'd to send to *Vespasian*, to Congratulate his Advancement to the Empire, alledging, *That it was for the Interest of the Public Weal, and the Honour of the Prince, to depute the first time, such of their Number, whose Lives and conversations were free from stain or reproach, that they might accustom his Ears to wholesome Counsel; that Thraseas, Soranus, and Sentius, (who were three of the Sincerest Persons in the Senate) having been Honour'd already with Vespasians Friendship, it behov'd 'em to be careful to let him see their Accusers. That a Deputation so judicious would be as it were a tart Intimation which*  
the

*the Senate gave him of those Persons, who were most worthy his Esteem and Favour; and likewise of those other whom he had reason to mistrust. That is to say, Flatterers, and other wicked People, that build their Fortunes upon the Ruin of others.*

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## E S S A Y XXVI.

**T**HE same Honors were Decreed to the Memory of *Drusus*, as to that of *Germanicus*, tho' with several Additions, as the latter Adulation will be always contriving to do.

*Says D'Ablancourt, They Decreed the same Honours to Drusus, as were decreed to the Memory of his Brother: But some new Ceremonies were added, as the latter Flattery is always the most Ingenious.*

By the means of this same Novelty it is, that Flatterers always support themselves in the Favour of their Princes. They would be weary of her Flatteries, had Adulation but one string to the tuneful Harp of their Encomiums. They only

only value those Honours that are peculiarly invented for themselves. For every Prince new Incense and Perfumes. Hence it comes to pass, that he who sits at present in the Throne, is more applauded, then all those that Reign'd before him. As Ridiculous and Stupid as the Emperor *Claudius* was, the slave to his own enfranchiz'd Bondmen, yet he fail'd not to find one Consul, who was not asham'd to propose the giving him the Title of *Father of the Senate*, alledging that *Father of his Country* was too Common; and that a Prince who blest the Empire every day with new Accumulations of his Favour, deserv'd at least to be Honour'd with a Sirname that never had been given to any of his Predecessors.

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## ESSAY XXVII.

THE chief Priests also when they made their Vows for the Welfare of the Prince, recommended likewise *Nero* and *Drusus* to the Gods, not so much for love of the young Men, as out of Flattery, the

D

Omission

Omission of which as equally begets Suspicion, as the Excess.

*The High Priest*, says D'Ablancourt, when they made their Vows for the Emperour, recommended to the Protection of the same Gods, Nero and Drusus, not so much through any Affection as out of Flattery, the Excess or Omission of which are equally dangerous.

We have already asserted, that Flatterie is void of Love, and that by straining at Flattery, Men often loose themselves in the Mazes of Folly and Imprudence. And certainly it was a great piece of Imprudence to equal to the Person of the Emperour, two young Striplings that were but just coming into the World. Majesty endures no Companion or Partnership in Honours. When others mount, she must descend. Flattery's mercenary; and is always for him that bids most. *Tiberius* was now in his declining years, and *Nero* and *Drusus* in the prime of their Youth. The High Priests look'd upon the Reign of *Tiberius*, as a Reign that would be soon at an end; and the Fortune of *Nero*, as a Sovereignty that was shortly to Commence. Therefore  
it



it was not through Affection but Interest, that they made so little a distinction between the two Brothers and *Tiberius*, who having lost his Son, seem'd to have no more then a precarious and languishing Authority. And this was the meaning of *Tiberius*, when he told the Pontiffs, That he was glad to see Children equall'd to his Hoary Age; which was a wipe by the by, to let 'em understand they had been too hasty to appoint him a Successor. And thus you see what an ill reception Flattery finds, when once it knows no bounds. But the Omission of Flattery is no less displeasing to Princes, as ascribing the cause of that neglect to Haughtiness, to Contumacy, or Contempt. And therefore it was that *Tiberius* so often complain'd of the Arrogance, and Indocibility of *Agrippina*, *Germanicus's* Wife; and that under *Nero*, it was objected against *Thrasea*, for no less then High Treason, that he had never either applauded, or countenanc'd the Flatteries of others, and that he always absented himself on purpose, when the Magistrates were to take their Oaths of Allegiance, or made any Vows for the Prosperity of the Prince: That he had never Sacrific'd in return of Thanks for

his Charming and Celestial Voice, that he would never acknowledg *Poppea* for a Goddess; that he had forborn coming to the Senate for three Years together, because he would not consent to his Decrees; to shew that none of his Majesties Actions pleas'd him, though he would not declare his mind by any open Contradiction or Opposition. That he left the Senate one day, when they were making Speeches against the Memory of *Agrippina*, the Mother of *Nero*. And thus you see in one Man, almost all the sins of Omission, which a Courtier could commit in the concerns of Flattery. Moreover, there are some Occasions where the Subject cannot dispence with Flattery as others do. Such are those which we call Congratulation, or Condolement. Tho' had *Thrasea* been present when the Magistrates took their Oaths, had he made his Vows for the Prince, or appear'd at the Funeral of *Poppea*, it could have been no stain to his Reputation. And therefore it does not become a Subject to be too stiff neither; but on the other side to comply with the Times and Humours of the Prince, as much as it is possible, more especially so far as the Rules of good Breeding and Civility extend.

Thus

Thus the younger *Pliny* being design'd Consul, refus'd to decree new honours to *Trajan*, as the Consuls Elect had wont to do to other Princes. But, said he, *I did not abstain from this same outward Appearance of Flattery, through any motive of Liberty infring'd, or of Constancy, but because I was assur'd of the Moderation of my Prince, therefore believing it would be much more to his Honour, for me to refuse the making any such Decree; altho' so just a Duty could not be tax'd of Flattery.* Those Grandees and other Persons who are oblig'd to live at Court, can never learn a better Lesson then this, to preserve themselves in their several Stations. 'Twere well, there were no Flatterers at all; but there is no need of such remarkable Demonstrations to prove Men are not so; in regard it shews like a piece of Contumacy and Mutinous Insurrection against the Majesty of a Prince. So that *Seneca* spoke rather like a Philosopher that condemn'd death, then a Courtier when he answer'd the Tribune whom *Nero* sent, to bring back his Justification, that he was not of a humour to Flatter, as nobody better knew then *Nero* himself, who had had more frequent Experience of *Seneca's* freedom then his Complaisance.

## ESSAY XXVIII.

**I**N the Senate he gave a severe charge in a set Speech, that no Man for the future should attempt to Elevate the fluctuating and unsteady Minds of the Young Men with over hasty Honours.

*In the Discourse which he made to the Senate, says D'Ablancourt, he gave a strict Caution, that no Man should swell the Volatile Minds of the Young Men with Honours above their Age.*

This Admonition concerns the Governours and Tutors of young Princes, for whom there is nothing so necessary as these Lessons of Moderation and Modesty. The Children of Princes know too soon that they are Princes, and by consequence that they are born to Command over Men, tho' sometimes they learn too late that they are but Men themselves. They are told upon every occasion, that all belongs to them; but the same Instructors at the same time forget to tell 'em like-

likewise, that their Persons belong to the Commonweal; that all their Time belongs to the Public; that the Burthen which they are one day to undergo, is very troublesome and painful; and besides that, extremely subject to the accidents of Fortune; that the Higher they are Advanc'd, the greater is the danger of their Fall; that they will never be belov'd, unless they love Reciprocally; for Love it self is Masterless, that to be belov'd of God, it behoves 'em to be belov'd of Men; that Flatterers mislead 'em, if they listen to their Charms; that when they are Flatter'd, 'tis not their Persons, but their Fortune that is fawn'd upon; since no Flatterer can be capable of sincere and real Love. That Princes can never know all things, nor bear the whole burthen of their Sovereign Employment, and therefore for the good of the Kingdom, and their own Honour, they ought to make choice of able and faithful Ministers, to assist 'em with their Counsels and their Industry; Dominion and Absolute Power, which commands all other Things, not having any more to desire, then their dextrous and truly Loyal Assistance. And lastly, That the safest and shortest Expedient to Reign

well, is for a Prince to propose to himself, as the Rule and Ballance of all his Actions to be no other then he would wish a Prince to be, were he a Subject.

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## ESSAY. XXIX.

**V**arro the Consul gratifi'd the hatred of *Sejanus*, by the loss of his own Reputation.

*The Consul Varro, says D'Ablancourt, became his own Informer, and was not ashamed to sacrifice his Reputation to the Interests of Sejanus.*

Flatterers are always no less Servile then Cruel: And seeing they Sacrifice so willingly their Honour to Favour, 'tis no wonder we are so easily induc'd to sacrifice to the Interest of Topping Favorites, the Objects of their Hatred. If the Favourite, says *Commynes*, would lay an Imposition of a Penny, they cry two. If the Prince do but threaten a Man, they cry, let him be Hang'd. And be sure Sir, to render your self formidable; and for themselves, their Deportment and their

*Frowns*

*Frowns discover nothing but Pride and Severity, as if Authority and Power were their Inheritance.* Observe by the way, that *Tacitus* when he mentions Flattery, frequently associates with it *Calumny*, which is indeed one of the most usual means, that Flatterers make use of to the Ruine of others.

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ESSAY XXX.

**L***Epidus* for the most part, deviated for the better, from the severe Adulations of others; and yet he carry'd himself so exactly poys'd that he flourish'd under *Tiberius* with an equal share of Authority and his Princes Favour. So that I am constrain'd to doubt whether the Inclination of Princes to some, and their Aversion to others, be not guided as many other things are by fate and the ruling Constellations at our Birth: And whether it be in our power to walk in a Path free from Ambition and Dan-

between untractable Contumacy,  
and deformed Servility.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Many times he al-  
lay'd the over-rigorous advice of others, not  
failing nevertheless in his Respect to his  
Prince, and by that means preserv'd two  
things most difficult to be preserv'd; the Ho-  
nour of his Employment, and his Majesties  
Favour. Which makes me frequently doubt  
whither the Favour of Great Men, and their  
Hatred, be not rather the effects of Destiny,  
and the Stars that governour Nativities, as  
are all other Accidents that happen in the  
World, then of Human Prudence, that so  
much pretends to have a share therein.*

The Moderation of *Lepidus*, is a re-  
markable Testimony, that there may be  
some great Personages, impenetrable to  
Flattery and Injustice under the Domini-  
on even of the most wicked Princes, and  
that there never was any Age so barren  
of Vertuous Courage, but has offer'd us  
Examples of such a noble Generosity.  
Prudence understands to choose out such  
a way that leads neither to the Precipice  
of Liberty, nor the Abyss of Servitude.  
She is neither *Libertine* nor *Slave*, but  
observes an equal Temper, so as neither



to be offensive to Majesty nor Justice. Sh  
gives to *Cesar*, that which belongs to  
*Cesar*; that is to say, Obedience and  
Duty: To God, that which is Gods, or  
whatever is required by a sincere Consci-  
ence. If at any time she Flatters, (for  
she cannot always avoid it) she makes  
use of such a sort of Flattery, that ra-  
ther informs then misleads the Prince,  
and serves as an Incitement to provoke  
him to some Generous Act, which other-  
wise perhaps he might not think of. For  
example, *Lepidus* to save the Life of  
*Lutorius Priscus*, whom *Haterius Agrippa*  
had sentenc'd to Death, for a certain  
Elegie made upon *Drusus*, makes it his  
business to applaud the Moderation of  
*Tiberius*; telling him, *That after he had*  
*several times heard him complain of those*  
*that had prevented his Clemency, he could*  
*not believe so just a Prince would ever confirm*  
*so rigorous a Sentence.* In short, when *Ti-*  
*berius*, (who was then in the Country)  
understood that *Drusus* was Executed, he  
blam'd the Senate, tho' the Reprimand  
were very gentle, and commended the  
Prudence of *Lepidus*, tho' on the other  
side, he did not rebuke *Agrippa* for his  
severity. Now it is certain, that if *Pris-*  
*cus* had been repreiv'd, *Tiberius* would  
never

never have taken away his Life, *Lepidus* so well understood to make him sensible of Honour.

In *Nero's* time, the President was quite the contrary. For the *Pretor*, *Antistius*, who had made a bloody Lampoon against him, was sav'd by *Thrasea*, who after he had spoken of *Nero*, as it is Customary to speak of a good Prince, and had bitterly enveigh'd against the Insolence of the *Pretor*, further added that the cruelty of preceding Reigns was out of date; that without putting the Criminal to those Torments which he deserv'd, he might be Punish'd in such a manner, that he should have no reason to object against his Judges; and lastly, That his Life would be a solemn Testimonial of Public Clemency. This Advice was no less prudent nor less respectful, then that of *Lepidus*; but it was as ill receiv'd by *Nero*, as the other was well receiv'd by *Tiberius*. *Thrasea* incurr'd the Hatred of *Nero*, and in a few years after lost his Life, for having sav'd *Antistius*, whom the Prince would fain have put to death. *Tiberius* and *Nero*, resembl'd each other in Cruelty; *Lepidus* and *Thrasea* were Competitors in Vertue, *Priscus* and *Antistius* equall'd each other in Arrogance and

and Sawciness ; for the one had the vanity to repeat his Elegy to a company of Ladies, and the other to read his Lam-  
pooon at a Public Feast. *Thrasea* pleaded for *Antistius*, as *Lepidus* had done for *Priscus* ; and yet that which made for *Lepidus*'s Honour, turn'd to the perdition of *Thrasea*. And thus you see the different effects of that Fatality, which *Tacitus* attributes to that same natural Inclination which Princes have for some, and that natural Antipathy which they have for others. But if we more narrowly pry into the real Character of *Lepidus*, and *Thrasea*'s Genius, we shall easily perceive, that tho' they were both highly Prudent, and equally averse to Flattery, yet there was a Remarkable difference between 'em ; for assur'dly, *Lepidus* was the more prudent of the two. *Lepidus* was Feasible and Complaisant, yet without any thing of low-spirited Meanness, or abject Condescention : *Thrasea* prided himself altogether in his Stedfastness and Constancy. *Lepidus* shap'd himself according to the Times he was born in, and the Humour of the Reigning Prince, as it is the duty of every good Subject so to do. *Thrasea* was a little too obstinate and hardy in what he thought Just and  
Rea-

Reasonable, which occasion'd that saying of *Nero*, That he wish'd *Thrasea* lov'd but him, as well as he did Justice. The latter was the better Man, the other the better Subject. By which Parallel it is apparent, that Prudence has a great share in the Conduct of Human Affairs, and that the Favour and Aversion of Princes, are not always the Effects of their Fancies.

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### ESSAY XXXI.

SOME things he had added more Contumaciously, then safe to be gather'd in by haughty Ears, and prone to be Captious.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Serenus had reproach'd his Ingratitude, in terms more Insolent then the nice and tender Ears of a Prince could endure.*

The Ears of Princes are not accusom'd to the rude touches of Insolence and Expostulation. When we speak to Princes, (said one of the Ancients) we must make choice of words either all Silken, or all Honey;

Honey; that is to say, our Language must be temper'd with Modesty, Prudence, and Submission. The Contumacy of Inferiours, causes the Superiours to lay aside his Clemency. Let a Subject have never so just reason to complain, he is not however allow'd to do it Arrogantly; for Submission and Respect are claims and rights never to be alienated from Majesty: There remains to the Subject nothing but the honour of Obedience. He that upbraids him with his Services, destroys the Fortune and Grandeur of a Prince; and generally such Reproaches are the fore-runners of Rebellion. And therefore upon this Foundation it was, that the Accusation was grounded, design'd against *Serenus* by his Son, that he had Conspir'd against *Tiberius*, and sent Incendiaries into *Gallia*, to kindle a War in that Province. Lastly, It better becomes a Subject to be a Flatterer, then to be too lavish of his Tongue, when he speaks to his Prince: But if he can avoid it, 'tis better for him to be neither the one, nor the other.

## ESSAY XXXII.

**N**either is it such a Myſterie to underſtand, when the Actions of Princes are truly and really Congratulated, and when with a Fictitious Joy.

*'Tis no great Difficulty, ſays D'Ablancourt, for great Perſonages to diſcover, when the Praises which are given 'em proceed from Flattery, and when from a real ſentiment of Affection.*

Politick Princes are not eaſily to be deluded by Flattery, for they conſult not their Ears, but their Hearts, which are ſufficiently Conſcious, whether or no they merit thoſe Praises that are beſtow'd upon 'em. They underſtand by what their Flatterers ſay, the undiſclos'd conceptions of their Hearts; well knowing, that when ſuch People make their Addreſſes to their Perſons, 'tis their Fortunes that they Court; a Truth that never deceives 'em, when ever they put it to the Tryal. Real Encomiums are moſt delight-

delightful to their Ears, because they are apt to believe they Merit what is given 'em; but false Applauses are distasteful, because they look upon 'em as By-reproaches of their Defaults. The younger *Pliny* reports, that *Trajan* wept for joy, and blush'd to hear himself call'd, *The Truly Vertuous*, because he knew it was to *Trajan* that they spoke, and not the Emperour. And afterwards he adds, That he was not afraid least *Trajan* should think, that while he discours'd of the Mildness, the Frugality, the Munificence, the Clemency, and Vigilancy of a Prince, he had any design to upbraid those Vices, which were their Opposites.

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## E S S A Y XXXIII.

THE Fathers decreed the Books to be Burnt, but they were not all found; some being hid up, and Publish'd afterwards. Which gives us an occasion to deride the Simplicity of those People, who think that the Memorials of Posterity can be stiff'd by present Dominion. For  
no

on the other side, the Authority of Punish'd Ingenuities encreases, and Princes who have made use of that Severity, have only purchas'd Dishonour to themselves, and enhaunc'd the Glory of the Authors suppress'd.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The purport of the Decree was this, That the Books should be Burnt, but they were privately preserv'd, (he leaves out and afterwards publish'd, which is that which both Tacitus and Suetonius seem to have inserted for particular Observation) which makes me laugh at their Impertinency, who think by vertue of a soon Expiring Power, to extinguish the Memorials of Future Ages. For on the other side, Punishment enlivens their works with new Authority, and all those Princes who have made tryal of that same Artifice, have only augmented their own Disgrace, and the Glory of their Enemy.*

Flattery and History could never well agree together, for the one is wholly devoted to Falshood, the other to Truth. The one deludes, the other informs and disabuses Princes. *Sejanus* order'd *Cordus* to be abus'd for having applauded *Brutus* in



in his Annals, and call'd *Cassius*, the *Last of the Romans*. And this was look'd upon as but newly imputed for a Crime, the rather for that all the preceding Historians, and among the rest, *Livie* and *Pollio*, had mention'd them with Honour; and for that *Augustus* himself, by whom they were Vanquish'd, had always had such a Veneration for their Memory, that he never remov'd their Images. Besides that, but three Years before, *Tiberius* himself, had permitted the Funeral Rites of *Junia*, Sister to *Brutus*, the Wife of *Cassius*, and *Cato's* Niece, to be Solemniz'd with all the Ceremonies that appertain'd to her Illustrious Birth. Nevertheless, the Senate, to please *Sejanus*, condemn'd both *Cordus* and his History, the purport of which was, that the last of the *Romans* was dead, and that at *Rome* there remain'd alive no other then such as sacrific'd all to Favour. For here the Senate gave the Appellation of Parricides and Robbers to two Men, whom History had celebrated for Illustrious and Famous Personages. So that *Cordus's* only Crime was this, That he had spoken like a faithful Historian, and that he was adjudg'd capable, to Write with the same Liberty, the Reign of *Tiberius*, who  
after

after the death of *Drusus*, began to grow worse and worse; and to display the Actions of *Sejanus*, who so insolently abus'd his Favour. Great Favourites infinitely delude themselves, when they think their Reputation shelter'd by the suppression of Books, that discover their Miscarriages. For to burn Books, is but to kindle in others a Curiosity to read 'em, whereas the taking little or no notice at all of 'em, renders 'em less priz'd by those that have already read 'em, and cures that Itch in others, to be prying into a subject little regarded. 'Tis an easie thing for Men in Power to be reveng'd upon Historians, whose Lives are in their Hands, but their Authority will not prevail against the History, which is Immortal, and will devolve it self to the Judgment of Permanent Posterity. 'Twas very cunningly done, says *Tacitus*, to burn the Writings of *Rusticus Arulenus*, and *Seneca*, as if that Fire could stifle the Voice of the Roman People, the Liberty of the Senate, and the Memory of Mankind. *Posterity*, says *Cordus*, renders to every one their due, and they who will remember Brutus and Cassius, will not fail to remember me as well. Meaning, that Posterity would honour his Memory, as it had honour'd the Memory of those great Men.

ESSAY XXXIV.

AND the Honour of *Augustus* will vanish, when prophan'd with promiscuous Adorations.

Says D'Ablancourt, *For this would be to lessen the Honour of Augustus, to Communicate it to every Body without Distinction.*

Princes despise those Honours that are common to others, esteeming only those that are new and only invented for themselves. They are likewise for the most part jealous of their Honour, that they hardly will admit an equality of Comparison with their Predecessors, how Illustrious soever they were. *Flattery*, said Pliny to Trajan, *has so drain'd the Fountain of Encomiums*, that we have not any remaining more, that are new, to give Thee. The only Honour which we can pretend to pay Thee is, not to decree Thee any; so well assur'd we are of thy Modesty and Bashfulness. A Commendation worthy the Prince who receiv'd it, and the Subject that Address'd it. And therefore Cardinal Richlieu, tho' he

he lov'd Applause, yet would not accept of *Balzac's* Praises, alledging, 'Twas no Honour to be extoll'd by a Person that equally prais'd all Men alike; so prone that Authour was to *Hyperboles*.

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## ESSAY. XXXV.

**T**Hrough the Benevolence of *Augustus* ratifi'd by *Tiberius* himself, it has been the custom, that the Suppliant, e'er he put up his Prayers and Wishes to the Gods, should first address them to his Prince's Ears.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The purport of his Letter was, That his Obligation was such to the Memory of Augustus, and to the Testimonies of Tiberius's Affections, that he address'd his Prayers rather to the Emperour than the Gods.*

This Language well befits the Flatterers at Court, who adore no other Deity but Fortune. This is a Theme so plain, it needs no Commentary: Besides

sides that, my design is only to Inform, and not to Offend.

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ESSAY XXXVI.

**T***iberius* heard the Opprobrious Language with which his Reputation was wounded, and was so deeply concern'd, that he cried out, he would immediately clear himself, and stand a Tryal. Nor could the Persuasions of nearest Relations, or the Flatteries of all his Followers compose his Mind, but with Elaborate Importunity.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Tiberius heard the Defamations that were thrown upon him, and cry'd out in a great Fury, that he would at the same instant clear himself of those Calumnies; so that it was a difficult task of the Senate, and all his Friends together, to appease him with all their Flatteries and Prayers.*

Flattery is never so feasonable, nor runs to that excess, as when the Prince  
is

is wound'd in his Honour. *Tiberius* had receiv'd a Bloody Affront. For a certain Officer in the Army, coming in as an Evidence against one *Montanus*, who had utter'd hainous Language against the Emperour, in a full Senate repeated the Words as they were spoken, to add the more weight to his Testimony; and the more the Senators shew'd their unwillingness to understand him, as detesting his Impudence, the more obstinate the Officer was to make good his Accusation. So that considering *Tiberius's* humour, a Prince so politic and dextrous in concealing his Vices, and designing 'em into Vertues, it was no wonder he should be more enrag'd against the Testimony, then against the Person accus'd. And this was that which oblig'd him to protest with so much Violence, and be so earnest to clear himself of what was laid to his Charge.

Now when a Prince goes about to insist upon his Justification, especially when the Imputation from which he thinks to clear himself is true, and known to all the World, then it is, that Flattery becomes most pleasing to him; and that he is overjoy'd when they tell them, that he has no need to purge himself from Scandals

dals and Reproaches which no Body believes; that it redounds to his Honour to be hated by Wicked and Vicious People; that it is peculiar to Princes to do well; and for Subjects to talk Maliciously and Scandalously of Princes. Moreover, as Flattery is always excessive toward bad Princes, as being fear'd and dreaded most of all; so are Scandal and Oblivion most outrageous, when they believe themselves most secure; that is to say, when Men are venting their dis gusts among their Intimate and most Familiar Acquaintance, where every one discovers the very bottom of his Heart. So that it is the most certain Mark of a good Prince, when his Subjects discourse of him in their Private Houses and Retirements, as he is cry'd up at Court. And this it was which the younger *Pliny* intended, when speaking to *Trajan*. *This day*, said he, *it is, that we have just reason to complain, that our secret discourses are not spy'd and observ'd but by Princes which hate us: For if good Princes were so Inquisitive as the bad, what a pleasure would it be to Thee, to hear what we discourse of Thee in our private Dwellings, to our Wives, our Children, and our Servants? Then thou would'st know the full extent of our Love*

*and Admiration of thy Vertues, and how we power forth our Prayers continually for thy long and prosperous Reign. Then, tho' Love and Hatred are perfect Contraries, thou wouldst understand, that in our Houses there is so far a kind of Reconciliation between those opposite Passions, that we adore and reverence Vertuous Princes with the same excess of Cordial Affection, as with detestation we abominate unruly Tyranny.*

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## E S S A Y   XXXVII.

**W**Hen the Conflagration had consum'd all things round about it, the Effigies of *Tiberius* only remain'd untouch'd: So that the *Clandii* were look'd upon as peculiarly favour'd by the Gods, and there was a farther addition of Reverence and Adoration to the Place, wherein the Gods had shew'n so high an Honour to the Prince.

Says D'Ablancourt, *It was a Remarkable Testimony that the Clandian Family was Sacred and Favour'd by the Gods, and that the*  
Place



*Place deserv'd a particular Reverence where they had shew'd a Miracle so particular in favour of the Prince.*

Flatterers consider all things to the Princes Honour, and cry up for Testimonials of their Vertue, those Accidents which are the effect of Chance and Hazard only. They never mind, that Flattery becomes Ridiculous, unless it be such as is pleasing to the Prince. And such was this same Adulation of the Senate, upon this occasion; for that *Tiberius* had a custom to appropriate Honours to himself from all Accidents, that would bear a favourable Construction. On the other side, he could not chuse but be highly satisfi'd, to see the Senate make a Construction so different from that of the People, who laid the Fire to his Charge, and all the other Calamities that had befallen the City, as having left it a little before, in spite of the unlucky Signs and Omens that appear'd upon the *Augur's* Consultations. The good Fortune of Princes, many times supplies the place of Merit; for Men have always a high Opinion of their Worth, so long as they are happy. Let the Accidents that happen, be ne're so meerly Casual, they

are taken for assur'd Omens of their Grandeur, and are of great importance to improve that Veneration which Men pretend to be their due.

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## E S S A Y XXXVIII.

**N**either was it the Care of the Senate, to prevent loss of Honour upon the Frontiers of the Empire. An inward Consternation had possess'd their Spirits, for which the only remedy they could provide was Flattery. So that altho' they had several Affairs of higher Importance that requir'd their Debates, they decreed an Altar to *Clemency*, another to *Friendship*, and Statues to *Cæsar* and *Sejanus* round about.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Senate troubl'd and amus'd with inward fears, neglected the Frontiers of the Empire; and to shelter themselves under some signal piece of Flattery, never minding those more Important Affairs which they had under their Consideration*

*ration, decreed Altars to Clemency and Friendship, and Statues to the Emperour and Sejanus.*

Under evil Princes the Grandees take little Care of the Public Misfortunes, as being solely imploy'd to secure themselves. The more in fear Men are, the more they abandon themselves to Flattery. Especially those Persons that live at Court, or else have high Employments to lose; in regard their Advancement, exposes them to greater Dangers then others. And then again, when a Prince dissembles the bad Condition of his Affairs, then it is that he is Flatter'd most of all; every one affecting to shew his absolute reliance upon the Fortune and the Prudence of his Prince.

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## E S S A Y. XXXIX.

**B**UT as for *Junius Gallio*, who had decreed that the *Pretorian* Soldiers having serv'd out their full time, might have the Priviledge to place themselves in the Amphitheatre upon the first Fourteen Benches among the Knights, he chid him severely. Such was the Reward that *Gallio* had for his premeditated piece of Adulation, to be Expell'd the Senate.

*Junius Gallio*, says *D'Ablancourt*, was severely handl'd, for having propos'd, that the Soldiers of the Guard, might sit upon the Fourteen first Rows of Benches in the Theatre, after they had serv'd their time in the Wars.—— And *Gallio*, for the Reward of his premeditated Flattery, was Ejected out of the Senate.

He that Flatters, ought to understand the nice Temper of the Person to whom he makes his Addresses; for otherwise he

he loses his Aim, while contrary to his Expectation, his Flattery becomes offensive. *Gallio* thought he had highly oblig'd *Tiberius*, in decreeing a new Honour to the Soldiers of the Pretorian Guards. But *Tiberius* was offended, that he should take upon him to meddle with rewarding the Soldiers. *What has Gallio to do*, said he, in his Answer to the Senate, *with the Priviledges of the Pretorian Soldiers? who being under the Command of none, but only the Emperour, ought not to have their dependance but upon him alone? Does he believe he has found out an Expedient which Augustus never dream't of? Rather may it not be thought that this same Creature of Sejanus, sought to bring an Innovation into Military Discipline, on purpose to prepare the Soldiers for Rebellion?* These Expressions of *Tiberius* demonstrate, that he had reason to be offended with a Proposal, which perhaps a Prince less Politic than he, would have taken for an Honour. For had the Soldiers of the Guards obtain'd this Priviledge to sit equal with the Roman Knights, they had been beholding for their Honour only to the Senate. To which we may add, that such an Honour would have rather serv'd to

swell their Pride, then encrease their Affections to their Prince.

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## ESSAY XL.

**L***ucius Pifo*, chief Pontiff, di'd in his Bed about this time ; ( which was rare for a Man so eminent in Dignity ) a Person who willingly never utter'd an expression that favour'd of Servility ; or if necessity constrain'd him, temper'd his words with Prudence and Sobriety.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Pontiff, Lucius Pifo, di'd a Natural Death, which was a rare thing at that time, considering his high Reputation. A Person that never propounded any Advice that misbecame the Dignity of his Employment ; and when he was constrain'd to approve the Flatteries of others, would be always sure to moderate their high flown Excesses.*

A Man may both preserve his Life, and his Dignity, yet neither be a Slave nor a Flatterer, as is apparent from the Example

ample of *Piso*, who liv'd Fourſcore Years, and yet neither loſt his Employment, nor ſuffer'd in his Reputation either under *Auguſtus*, or *Tiberius*, by whom he was always highly eſteem'd. But who expects the ſame good Fortune, muſt take the ſame Courſe. *Tacitus* ſays, that he never miſcarry'd in any ſervile piece of Flattery: But he adds, that ſometimes he ſurrendr'd to the Flatteries of others upon ſome occaſions. To teach Great Men to comply with the Experiences of Seasons and Buſineſs. Generoſity is a Vertue that becomes 'em, however they muſt be careful, leaſt it degenerate into Obſtinacy and Raſhneſs: For as *Pliny* ſays, Neceſſity is a part of Reaſon. Had *Piſo* always oppos'd his Colleagues, he had never been in a condition by the preſervation of his Authority, to have allay'd their Heats; becauſe they would have concerted together, to thwart his Counſels: Whereas they many times gave way to him, as he ſometimes ſubmitted to them.

## ESSAY XLI.

FROM whence *Vitellius* returning to *Rome*, partly for fear of *Caius Cesar*, and partly through his intimate Familiarity with *Claudius*, he abandon'd himself to such a degree of Abject Slavery, that he became an Exemplar to Posterity of Obsequious Infamy.

Says D'Ablancourt, *At his Return debauch'd by his dread of Caius, and the Favours of Claudius, he only serv'd to Posterity an example of Ignominious Servitude.*

Fear and Favour are commonly the Original Sources of Flattery. He that stands in fear of his Life, Flatters to preserve it; and he that is warm in the Favour of his Prince, betakes himself to Adulation, that he may not lose it. And thus, were it not for Self-interest, there would be no Flattery.



ESSAY XLII.

**T**hey that dwelt by the River, brought news that *Euphrates*, in a season free from Rain, or any immoderate Showres, was swell'd to an unusual and prodigious height; and carry'd a Foam that curl'd upon the Water in white Circles like so many Diadems; from whence they gather'd a prosperous Omen, to encourage his crossing the Stream with his Army.

*They brought News, says D'Ablancourt, that the River Euphrates was swell'd, and yet no Showres had fallen, and seem'd to curle its Waters in the shape of a Diadem. Some took this for a happy Omen, &c.*

Flattery interprets all things to the Advantage of Princes, and particularly at the beginning of their Reigns. For then it is, that she feeds their Humours with vain hopes; and that all People who  
make

make their approaches to the New Sovereign, are equally contending to excel each other in quaintness of Addresses. Nor is it enough for Princes to be deluded by their Flatterers, *Astrologie*, the ancient Companion of Falshood, intrudes for a share, and then chiefly succeeds in her Designs, when she meets with an easiness in the Prince, to believe the greatest Uncertainties in the World. There is not any Prince, to whom, at his first coming to the Crown, she does not pretend, but that he shall be more happy then *Augustus*, and that he shall Live till he is grown weary of his Grandeur. But the most numerous part of Princes are deceiv'd by these vain Calculations, and reap no other Fruit of their Credulity, then the Misfortunes of their unwary Confidence.

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### ESSAY XLIII.

**A**ND labours by Obloquie to be inform'd of the Truth, to which Adulation is an Enemy.

*D'Ablancourt has omitted this Expression.*  
*This*

This is a Maxim, of which if Princes and great Men were fully convinc'd, they would never be so ready to hearken to their Flatterers, or at least to credit their Flatteries, who make it their only business to disguise and conceal from their Knowledge, the real certainty of Things that most concern 'em.

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ESSAY XLIV.

**B**UT the *Seleucences* were they, who outdid the rest in Flattery. — They loaded *Tiridates* not only with the Honours of their Ancient Kings, but with all the profuse and quaint Additions of later Ages.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Seleucia surpass'd all the other Cities in Magnificence.* —

*Tiridates was receiv'd with Honours of all sorts. He leaves out, That Seleucia added modern Adulation to their Ancient Honours; wherein consists the stress of the Sentence.*

The latest Flattery is always the most Ingenious; And this same charming Novelty

velty it is, by which she gains and encroaches upon the Favour and Affection of Princes, that nauseate vulgar Honours worn threadbare by Custome. *Selencia*, tho' she were then a free Republic, would needs be so Obsequious, as to surpass in Servitude all the other Cities through which *Tiridates* had March'd. Such is the eager desire that Subjects have to Gratifie a new Prince, not so much out of any love to his Person, as the Novelty of the Government.

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## ESSAY XLV.

**B**UT upon *Artabanus* they powr'd forth all their Scorn and Contempt, of the Race of the *Arfacidæ* by the Mothers side, and otherwise Degenerate and Mean.

Says D'Ablancourt, *They publicly debas'd the glory of his Enemy. For they upbraided Artabanus, that he had nothing in him of the Blood of the Arfacidæ, tho' he were descended from 'em by his Mothers side. It is a Cotnradiction to say, That he had nothing in him of the Royal Blood of the Arfacidæ,*

*cidæ*, and yet allow his Mother to be a Branch of the same Family; and therefore, what Tacitus affirms, should D'Ablancourt have also said, that he was of the Ancient Family of the *Arfacidæ* by his Mothers side, however he came to Degenerate in other things.

They dispis'd *Artabanus*, to heap the greater Honour upon *Tiridates*, who was bred up from his Infancy in all the Effeminacy and Softness of Roman Education. Whereas *Artabanus* setting aside his Cruelty, was a Heroic Prince, who had put a happy and successful end to several Wars with his Neighbours. A proof sufficient of the Impertinency of Flattery, that lessens and ecclipses the Glory of so great and famous a Name, to advance the honour of weak and sloathful Effeminacy.

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ESSAY. XLVI.

THEN *Vitellius*, with Tears in his Eyes, alledging the antiquity of the Friendship contracted between 'em, repeating in the next place the good Services which *Asiaticus* had don

done the Commonweal, and his late Expedition against *Brittain*, or whatever else seem'd proper to raise Compassion, besought his Judges that he might have leave to choose his Death; and he was seconded by *Claudius*, who mov'd for the same Clemency.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Vitellius* in few words related the first beginning of their Friendship, and running over cursorily all the past Services which *Asiaticus* had done the Public, and particularly mentioning his last Enterprize against *Brittain*, he propos'd to permit him to make choice of his own Death; to which the Emperour consented, as a particular favour done him. Which latter words pass by the Ironie of *Tacitus*, who tells ye, that *Claudius* interceded for the same Clemency.

I have already observ'd, that all Flatterers are naturally Cruel; nor need we a clearer Example, then this of *Vitellius*, to prove this Assertion. *Messalina*, the Emperour *Claudius's* Wife, caus'd *Asiaticus* to be accus'd of several Crimes against the State, thirsting after his Life,  
and

and his delicious Gardens. *Claudius* consulted *Vitellius*, *Messalina's* confident, and it may be, one of her Adulterers also: *Vitellius* therefore, that he might not lose her Favour, betrays his old Friend, and throws away his Life, under a pretended Mitigation of his Punishment. And thus you see the Trust of Courtiers Friendship. Their Love and Friendship without Hesitation plie to Interest. They readily bestow their Praises, and undermine your Life at the same time: They utter Clemency with their Lips, but Cruelty is in their Hearts.

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ESSAY XLVII.

**V***itellius* voted a Remuneration of Five and twenty thousand Crowns to be given *Sosibius*, for instructing *Britanicks* with his Precepts, and the Emperour with his Counsel.

*Sosibius*, says D'Ablancourt, had a reward of Five and twenty thousand Crowns, by the Advice of *Vitellius*, under pretence of the good Services which he did the Emperour

perour and his Son, by assisting the one with his Precepts, and the other with his Counsels. . .

*Sofibius*, Tutor to *Britanicus* the Son of *Claudius*, was made use of as an Evidence against *Asiaticus*; and for this piece of of Service it was, that *Vitellius* would needs vote him a Reward so considerable, under the fair and specious pretence of Merit and Desert. And thus it is, that Flattery adorns and beautifies deformed Villany, with honourable and graceful Titles. *Vitellius* calls that *Counsel*, to which Men of Vertue and Integrity, would have given the Appellation of Tyranny. *Sofibius* had told the Emperour, that the excessive Riches of private Persons many times prov'd fatal to Princes, on purpose to provoke him to a suspicion of *Asiaticus's* Wealth, and a seizure of his Estate; which being once design'd by *Messalina*, the officious Pedagogue was no less diligent to appear as a Witness against the Innocent Gentleman, whose Crimes were ready multiply'd to take away his Life. Certainly, if the Instruction which he gave *Britanicus*, were answerable to the Maxims which he



he instill'd into the Father, he was a dangerous Tutor for a young Prince.

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ESSAY XLVIII.

BUT *Claudius* reprov'd the Consul, as urging his Flatteries a little too high.

Says D'Ablancourt, A little too concise,  
*The Emperour reprov'd the Consul for his Flattery.*

Princes have as great an Antipathy against those that Flatter too openly and excessively, as against those that are too sparing of their Respect: For the former seem to have a mean opinion of their Parts, and the latter of their Actions. Of their Parts, as if they thought their Prince not able to discern the Vanity of such Hyperboles. Of their Actions, because a Prince may well believe, that they who vouchsafe 'em a kind Commendation, either can find out nothing worth their Applause, or else discover much that deserves Reproof and Censure. Witness that Senator *Thrasea*, whose silence was laid

laid to his Charge by his Accusers, as a sufficient mark of his dislike of the Princes Government.

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## ESSAY XLIX.

**T**Herefore *Vitellius* covering his Servile Fallacies with the name of *Censor*, and foreseeing a new Torrent of Usurpation ready to supplant the true Successour, that he might purchase the good opinion of *Agrippina*, began betimes to intregue himself in her Designs.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Vitellius* to gain the good will of *Agrippina*, who, as he saw was mounting into Favour. But he leaves out the words (*Ingruentium Dominationum provisor*) by which Tacitus intended to shew that *Vitellius* foresaw that *Agrippina* would labour to set up *Nero* to the Exclusion of *Britannicus*.

This same Conduct of *Vitellius*, is a perfect demonstration of that which Flatterers put in practice every day. Before  
he

he had devoted all his Grandeur and Reputation at Court to serve *Massaline*; when she was dead, he employ'd all his Interest to second *Agrippina*, who was forming a Design, to supplant *Britannicus* the young Prince, and lawful Heir to the Empire, meerly for the Advancement of her own Son. And thus are Flatterers no less Ungrateful then Cruel, as having no other aim then their own Interest. For Acknowledgment can only proceed from Love, and consequently is never to be expected from the Breasts of Flatterers, who are incapable of real Affection.

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ESSAY. L.

NOR would they venture yet to Solemnise the Nuptials; there being no President to be found of an Uncle, that ever espous'd his Niece.—— Nor did this Hesitation cease, till *Vitellius* by his wonted Artifices undertook to remove the Obstacle:

Says

Says D'Ablancourt, *They durst not openly Celebrate the Marriage; for that there never had been any such thing seen before in Rome. But at length Vitellius to remove those Difficulties, &c. where he again suppresses those Emphatical words, (Nec ante Omisſa cunctatio.)*

*Claudius* was afraid leaſt his Marriage with *Agrippina* ſhould be look'd upon as Inceſtuous; and conſequently draw from Heaven ſome dire Calamity upon the Empire. *Vitellius* therefore to gratifie this Princeſs, who reſolv'd to Reign, at the expence of Honour, Vertue, Modeſty, and Proſtitution it ſelf, declar'd in a full Senate, That the welfare of the Empire depended upon this Marriage; that it was a viſible effect of the Providence of the Gods, that *Agrippina*, who was of the Imperial Blood, and had given ſufficient Teſtimonies of Fœcundity, and of all the noble Qualities requir'd in an Empreſs, ſhould happen to be a Widow, at the ſame time, that the Emperour was in a condition to Eſpouſe her: That, in truth, it was a Novelty at *Rome*, for a Man to Marry his Brothers Daughter; yet that there was no Law which forbid it, and that all other Nations authorz'd the

the Act by publick Presidents: That as Marriages between Cousin Germans, heretofore but rarely known, were now by allowance of Time, become the frequent Mode, succeeding ages would permit the same liberty also in this Case ; and therefore that was their duty to accommodate their Debates, to the present necessity of Affairs. Thus that which *Claudius* thought to be a Crime, (and was so indeed among the *Romans*) was by *Vitellius* burnish'd over with the specious Titles, not only of the *Welfare of the Empire*, but the Will of the Gods. And thus we see how Flatterers mislead unsteady Princes, and embolden 'em to do those things, which of themselves they dread. For *Tacitus* makes this Marriage so great a Crime, that he affirms it to be the Source and Original of all *Agrippina's* Impieties.

## ESSAY EI.

**N**OR were there any wanting who crowded out of the Senate, crying out, they would make use of Force, if *Cæsar* delay'd. And a promiscuous Multitude being got together, clamour'd aloud, that it was the Voice of the *Roman* People. Then *Claudius* without farther Hesitation enter'd the Senate, and demanded a Decree, declaring all Marriages for the future Legitimate, between Uncles and Nieces.

Says D'Ablancourt, *There were some so Insolent, as to rise from their Seats, and rush out of the Senate, as it were to constrain the Emperour if he made any Difficulties; and the Multitude cry'd out in the Streets, that it was the Will of the Roman People. Then Claudius without any farther delay entring the Senate, demanded a Decree to Legitimate this Marriage, and that it might be lawful for the future, for the Uncle to Marry the Niece.*

Princes

Princes are misguided by their Flatterers, and the People are led astray by the Examples of their Princes. How pleasing and how acceptable is that sort of Adulation, which Imposes upon Princes a necessity to do the Thing, which they desire themselves with far more earnestness, then they with all their Zeal make shew of, who put the Force upon 'em. They reap all the Pleasure, and their Subjects all the Infamy.

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ESSAY LII.

AND yet there was not found but one, who attempted such a Marriage, *Talledius Severus*, a Roman Knight; to which, as it was reputed, he was meerly instigated, to serve his Mistress *Agrippina*.

*However, says D'Ablancourt, there was but one single Person who follow'd the Example; which by report he always did, to pleasure Agrippina.*

A certain Proof, that Subjects think quite otherwise then they speak. When  
F they

they find that the Prince's desires are eagerly bent for speedy Satisfaction, they shew themselves more eager still to gratifie his Impatience: Yet afterward they shew their Dislike, in forbearing to follow the Example; which is the most certain Symptom which the People can give of their ill Resentment of the Act. *Claudius* had caus'd his Marriage to be decreed Legitimate by the Senate, believing the *Romans* would follow his Example, and authorize those Marriages by Custom. However notwithstanding the Decree, which was a sufficient shelter from Punishment or Infamy; yet there was but one single Person who follow'd his President. Nor did he neither marry his Wife out of any true perswasion that his Marriage was Just and Lawful, but out of a desire to please the Empress, and to raise his Fortune by an Act, of which there was no Body car'd to share the Reward.



## ESSAY LIII.

**H**Owever thanks was return'd the Prince, intermix'd with more exquisite Adulations of *Tiberius*; and a Law enacted, that the Name of *Nero* should be Transferr'd into the *Claudian* Family.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Senate return'd thanks to the Emperour, wherein they cunningly interwove the Praises of Nero, who was oblig'd to quit the name of Domitius for that of Nero, in favour of his Adoption.*

Here *Claudius* had the Thanks of the Senate for a great piece of Injustice which he had done *Britannicus*, his own Son, as if he had perform'd some noble Exploit. And *Nero*, according to the custom of Flattery, which always addresses her Adorations to the Rising Sun, was applauded, as if he had been worthy of the Empire, whereas all his Pretensions had no other Foundation then

an Incestuous Marriage, and a pernicious Adoption made by a weak and misguided Prince. But whether Princes do well or ill, they are always applauded, and have always Thanks return'd 'em for what they do, and never more then when they least deserve either the one or the other. And this is an easie and certain Rule, by which to know a Sycophant.

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## ESSAY LIV.

**T**O which it was added by *Scipio Cornelius*, that Thanks should be publickly given to *Pallas*, for that he being Sprung from the Kings of *Arcadia*, prefer the Public Benefit before his Ancient Nobility, and condescended to be still a Servant to the Emperour.

*Scipio added, Says D'Ablandcourt, that Thanks should be given to Pallas, for that being descended from the Arcadian Kings, he prefer'd the Interest of the Empire when his Grandeur was so Sublime, and chose rather to be counted one of the Emperours Ministers.*

Thus

Thus we find what comes to pass, when the Ministers are more Powerful then the Prince; or at least, when the Prince suffers himself to be Govern'd by his Ministers, as *Claudius* did. Flatterers who adore the Favour only, will not allow the Prince to honour the Minister, but will have the Minister to be an honour to the Prince. *Pallas* was no more then one of *Claudius*'s Bondmen, by him made Free, and for this a Noble Senator has the confidence to applaud him in a full Senate, for contenting himself with the Quality of a Chief Minister. As if he would have said, that he deserv'd to supply his Masters Throne, who indeed according to the younger *Pliny*'s Expression, was no more then a Slave to his Bondmen.

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ESSAY LV.

AND a Decree of the Senate was Engrav'd in Marble, and publickly Erected, wherein an Enfranchis'd Slave, in possession of above seven Millions in Gold, was ex-

toll'd for his Frugality, equal to the  
Parcimony of Ancient Times.

Says D'Ablancourt, *They made a Decree by which an Enfranchis'd Slave, that was worth above seven Millions in Gold, had the praises of Ancient Frugality.*

The Consul, *Barea Soranus*, having decreed to *Pallas*, the Pretors Ornaments, and a Present of a Million of Money, in recompence of his Services, *Claudius* declar'd, That *Pallas* was satisfi'd with the Honour, and was unwilling to renounce his primitive Poverty. An Expression befitting the poorness of *Claudius's* Spirit, who 'tis very probable could not be Ignorant, that his Bondman was at that time Richer, then all the Kings of *Arcady*, his pretended Ancestors.

The younger *Pliny* makes mention of this Decree in two of his Letters, in such Terms as will serve in this place, for a most excellent Commentary. *There is, saith he, upon the High-way to Tivoly, a Monument of Pallas, with this Inscription: The Senate has decreed to Pallas the Ornaments of the Pretorship, and the Gift of a Million, for his Fidelity and Zeal*  
to-

toward his Masters, but he is contented with the Honour.

*But certainly I was never an Admirer of those things that proceed rather from Fortune than Judgment. More especially this Inscription taught me a new Lesson, what a strange Impertinency those Men were guilty of, who decreed Honour to a Scoundrel; and what an unusual Impudence possess'd that Rascally Fellow to accept the one, and refuse the other; and to transfer these refusals to Posterity, for an Example of Modesty. But to what purpose doe I seem to be offended at it? Were it not more proper for me to make it the subject of my Derision, to the end they may not think to have gain'd any great Matter, who by their good Fortune, do but serve to be the Sport and Contempt of other Men?*

In another Letter, after he has told ye, that as Lofty as this Inscription seems to be, yet it appear'd both Modest and Humble, in respect of the Decree which he found among the Registers of the Senate, he adds the following words. *I omit to tell ye, that the Pretorian Ornaments were offer'd to a Slave, because they were Slaves themselves that offer'd 'em: And that it was Decreed, not only to beseech him, but also to force him to wear the Rings of*  
Gold.

Gold. For it was a Dishonour to the Majesty of the Senate, for a Pretorian to wear Rings of Steel. But this is nothing; that which is most worthy Observation, is this, That the Senate return'd Thanks to the Emperour, in the name of Pallas, for having spoken so advantageously in his behalf, and given leave to the Senate, to give him those Testimonials of their Respects and good Will toward him. For what could be more Honourable to the Senate, then to shew their Gratitude to Pallas? The Senate knowing how averse Pallas was from such Ambitious desires, ordain that an Address should be made to the Emperour, to beseech him that he would oblige Pallas to accept the Senates Kindness. There could not be a more Servile Condescension then this, that the Public Authority was made use of, and the Intercession of the Emperour implor'd, to mollifie the haughty Moderation of Pallas so far, as to bring him to vouchsafe the acceptance of the Senates Present.—— Now do but imagine you saw Pallas opposing the Decree of the Senate, and moving in Mitigation of the Honours which they offer'd him; refusing a Million, which was given him as a Present, tho' an excessive Gift, after he had accepted the Ornaments of the Pretorship, as a thing of mean Value; suppose  
you

you saw the Emperour, who submits to th  
Intreaties, or rather Commands of a Bond  
man Enfranchis'd, in the presence of the  
Senate. Then take a view of the Senate,  
who recite in their Decree, that among other  
Honours decreed to Pallas, they thought it  
material to add this Donative, in recom-  
pence of the Services he had done the Em-  
pire, and that they did not desist from their  
Importunities to Pallas, that he would be  
pleas'd to accept their Donative, but only in  
Obedience to the Emperour, whose Will and  
Pleasure it was not lawful for them to gain-  
say in any respect. The conclusion will be,  
that it requir'd no less then all the Modesty  
of Pallas, and all the Complaisance of the  
Senate, to excuse Pallas from accepting a  
whole Million of the Public Treasure. To  
which the Senate would never have consented,  
but that they thought it contrary to their  
Duty to disobey the Emperour. Now do you  
believe that this is all? No, there is some-  
thing worse behind. It was Ordain'd that  
this Decree should be Engrav'd in Brass, and  
set up next the Armed Statue of Julius Cæ-  
sar. 'Twas not enough for the Senate to be  
the Testimony of so great a piece of Infamy,  
they made choice of a most remarkable Place,  
where it was to be read by the Living; and  
transmitted to Posterity. It was their care,

that all the Honours offer'd to an Insolent Slave, should be Engrav'd in Brass; what he had refus'd, and what he had accepted. His Pretorian Ornaments were Inscrib'd upon Public and Eternal Monuments, like the Ancient Leagues, and Alliances, nay like the Sacred Laws of the Empire. Such of the Prince, such of the Senate, such of Pallas himself, was that I know not what to call it. While all Three expos'd to the view of all the World; Pallas his Insolence, the Emperour his Patience, and the Senate their Obsequious Servility.

Certainly the Roman Flattery far outdid the Adulation of the Greeks.

## ESSAY LVI.

WHILE he discours'd the Antiquity of his Extraction, and number'd up the Consulships and Triumphs of his Ancestors; while he Commemorated his Inclinations to Learning, and the Liberal Arts, and insisted upon the Prosperity of his Reign, in all which time the Commonweal had suffer'd



no Disaster, he was attentively and willingly heard by all: But when he came to applaud his Providence and his Wisdom, there was hardly any Person could refrain from Laughter.

Says D'Ablancourt, Nero spoke his Funeral Oration, wherein he highly extoll'd the Antiquity of his Descent, and the Grandeur of his Ancestors, Enumerating at length their Consulships and their Triumphs. Thence he proceeded to applaud his Learning; and told the People how that the Empire had suffer'd no Dammage during all his Reign. All which was heard attentively without the least Murmur; but when he began to talk of his Prudence and his Wisdom, they could not forbear Laughing.

Flatterers often fall into the same Imprudent Errors; while they strive to be excessive in their Praises, they render both themselves, and those they applaud Ridiculous. Many People Flatter, but few are Masters of the Art. Witness Seneca, who as great and piercing a Wit as he was, was not sensible of the Imper-tinency of the Harangue which he had made

made for his Pupil, till he found it to be derided by all that heard it. For to extol the Wisdom and Understanding of *Claudius*, who was so generally known to be a Person of weak and sottish Intellectuals, was to accuse all Mankind of Stupidity.

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## ESSAY. LVII.

**H**E forbids any Statues of Massie Gold or Silver to be Erected, in Honour of his Person.— And when the Magistrates took their Oaths, in Confirmation of the Acts of his Predecessors, he would not suffer *Antisthius*, one of his Consuls, to hear the Confirmation of His; for which the Senate loaded him with Encomiums, in hopes that since his youthful Thoughts were thus enclin'd to Vertues of a lower Rank, he would continue greater.

Nero, Says D'Ablancourt, would not suffer his Collegue to pay him that Honour; which was receiv'd with Acclamations more  
then

*then ordinary, on purpose to excite the youthful Prince to the love of Vertue. Which last words come far short of the sense of Tacitus.*

Modesty is a powerful means to procure both Love and Esteem to a young Prince, at the beginning of his Reign. For as it is then the time that Flattery sets all her Springs at work, to make her self the Darling of his Favour, so is it likewise then that he acquires a solid Reputation, if he ward off the first Assault of Adulation. And therefore it was, that the Senate were so profuse of their Praises to *Nero*, to pre-engage him by their own, against the Flatteries of others. For there is a sort of Adulation allowable and wholesome, which infuses into Princes and great Personages a love of Vertue, wherein consists their chiefest Glory.

## ESSAY LVIII.

**A**S lately too severe in Restraining his Son, now as immoderately Submissive.

Says D'Ablancourt, Agrippina was constrain'd to change her Severity into Caresses, and to repent her past Severity; and that with as much Submission now, as Rigour and Arrogance before.

Of all the sorts of Flatterers, there are none so bad as those that are forc'd to stoop, in hopes to regain the favour of a Prince, whom they have disoblig'd either by their Severity, or over sawcy Freedom. For being then to repair the Faults of their Ingratitude, they spare for no submission to recover what they have lost, either by their Moroseness, or their unwary Zeal. For there is a far greater mixture of Vanity then Integrity in that same Hardiness, which many Men assume in reprimanding Princes. Who are never to be contradicted, but when we are assur'd, that our Arguments are  
such

such as will not offend their Ears; and that it may prove the more Successful, the Admonition must be such as may seem to relish of Commendation. *Ita reprehendat ut laudet*, says *Pliny*, *Ep.* 12. l. 3. Thus *Gundamore*, the Spanish Ambassadour in *England*, perceiving that *James I.* particularly valu'd himself for his Scholastic Learning, very facetiously told him one day, that his Majesty spoke *Latin*, as it became *Gundamore* to speak it: Whereas Count *Gundamore* spoke it, as it rather became his Majesty to do; insinuating that Pedantic Learning was beneath a Prince, from whose Lips there is always expected something more Weighty and Sublime.

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ESSAY LIX.

Hereupon the Senate enacted Public Processions, and Days of Thanksgiving; Statues also, Triumphal Arches, and continual Consulships were decreed the Prince: And that the Days upon which the Victory was won, when the Tidings

dings were brought, and the Relation of it made, should be number'd among the Solemn Festivals; with several other Additions altogether so Exorbitant, that *Caius Cassius* readily consenting to the former Honours, farther declar'd, That if the Solemn Thanks to be repay'd the Gods were to be measur'd according to the merit of their Benignity, the whole Year would be too small a time for Public Supplications; and therefore that the Holy-days and Worky-days, ought only so to be divided, as that the Worship of the Gods might not be a hinderance to secular Business.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Senate ordain'd Public Processions, Triumphal Arches and Statues, together with a new Consulship in Honour of the Prince; and further that the Day wherein the City was taken, when the News was brought, as likewise when the Decrees were made, should be solemnly observ'd as Public Anniversaries, with several other Flatteries so excessive, that Caius Cassius*  
*who*

who consented to all the rest, was constrain'd to add, That if they were to render Thanks to the Gods proportionable to their Favours, the whole Year would not suffice; only some days were to be set a part and excepted, that the Worship of the Gods might not hinder Human Commerce.

This Article has no need of any Commentary. Only I will observe this by the way, That what *Cassius* spoke of *Nero's* Reign, might be well said of *Lewis the Great*, which has been a compleat Kalender of nothing else but Combats, Victories, and Triumphs. So that if *Paterculus* observ'd of *Caesar*, That his Atchievements were so great, that he who durst attempt and bring to pass such wondrous Enterprises, could hardly be other then some Deity: What would he have said of a Prince, that in a few days won those Cities, which *Caesar* could not take in many Months?

## ESSAY LX.

**I**N this same Consternation, the Flattery of the Centurions and Tribunes first erected his drooping hopes, crowding to kiss his Hands, and congratulate his Escape from the unsuspected and horrid Contrivances of his Mother. Then the Courtiers resorted thick and three-fold to the Temples; and thus the Example being set, the Neighbouring Municipal Towns of *Campania* testify'd their joy by Sacrifices, and public Addresses.

Says D'Ablancourt, Burrhus was the first who rais'd his Hopes, persuading the Officers of the Guard to Complement him upon the Danger he had escap'd, and testifie their Joy to see him deliver'd from the Ambushes of his Mother. After that, the Courtiers frequented the Temples, and Addresses came from all the Neighbouring Cities, &c.

Flat-



Flattery is a Contagion that spreads it self from Man to Man. When ever any one has led the way, all the rest are presently at strife who shall outdo him. *Nero* had but just embru'd his Hands in a most inhuman Parricide, and the People stood gazing one upon another with Fear and Astonishment. *Nero* himself was almost at his Wits end. But no sooner had the *Pretorian* Officers kiss'd his Hands, and assur'd him of their Fidelity, but the Courtiers, a sort of People always ready to unmask, were not asham'd to kneel before the Gods ; nor the Neighbouring Cities to offer Sacrifices for joy of such a perpetrated Crime, which cry'd aloud for Vengeance on the Detestable Murderer. Horrid Thanksgivings, more Impious then the Parricide it self. But the Senate acted higher yet, and worse: They decreed Public Intercessions for the Welfare of the Prince, and put the day of his Mothers Nativity among the Unfortunate Days ; and that upon which her pretended Conspiracy was discover'd, among the most Solemn Festivals of the Year. So true it is, that never greater Honours are decreed to Princes, then when they are extreamly hated. For Dissimulation is more ingenious then Truth,

Truth, says the younger *Pliny*; Servitude then Freedom; and Fear then Love.

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## E S S A Y LXI.

**W**Hile he was hesitating in the Cities of *Campania*, how he might return to the City, and no less anxious whether to expect either the Addresses of the Obsequious Senate, or the Favour of the People, all the most infamous of his Adherents argu'd against his vain fears, that *Agrippina's* name was become odious, and that by her Death he had inflam'd the affection of the People toward him; and therefore that he should go with an undaunted Courage, and try the effects of their veneration upon the Place.

Says D'Ablancourt, *While the Emperor staid in the Cities of Campania, uncertain whether he should return to Rome, or seek the Applauses of the Senate and the People*

People first : ( Tacitus does not say whether he should seek, but wait for, considering the Enormity of his Crime.) His Courtiers advis'd him to go on, and fear nothing; for that they should find the Affections of the People redoubl'd by the death of Agrippina, whose very memory they Execrated; and therefore that he should go Courageously to reap the fruit of his Renown and Glory.

Tho' Princes are made believe that they have an absolute Liberty to do what er'e they please, yet are they touch'd with an inward Remorce, when they either do or have committed any Act which is in it self unlawful. After Nero had caus'd his Mother to be murder'd, he durst not shew his Face, he wander'd from City to City, thinking to dissipate those Fears and Jealousies with which the apparition of his Crime that haunted him where er'e he went, continually tormented his mind. But his Flatterers, accusom'd to extoll the most hainous miscarriages of great Personages, soon Cur'd him of his Shame and his Fear; perswading him that all the People of Rome rejoyc'd at Agrippina's death, and thought themselves beholding to him for having rid her out of the way, tho' every Body  
in

in secret detested the Action, and had a bad opinion of *Seneca*, for the Letters which he wrote to the Senate, in Justification of *Nero*. Ill done in *Seneca*, tho' seasonably perhaps, who after he had been beholding to *Agrippina* for all his Fortune, had the grace to lay to her charge all the Mischiefs, and all the acts of Injustice, that had been committed in *Claudius's* Reign. He whom she had recall'd from Exile, and advanc'd to be Tutor to her Son, where he had rammass'd together above seven Millions of Gold in four Years. A fair Proof, that he knew how better to discourse of *Benefits* and *Kindnesses* then to acknowledge 'em; and that it is but too true, that how deeply soever Men are oblig'd to those who fall into Misfortune, they then believe the Engagement fully satisfy'd.

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ESSAY LXII.

**H**ence resuming his wonted Pride, and victor over Public Servitude, he enters the Capital, pays his Thanks, and abandons himself to all manner of Luxury and Lasciviousness.

Says D'Ablancourt, *He ascended into the Capital, triumphing over Public Servitude, and having paid his Thanks to the Gods, gave himself over to all manner of Voluptuousness.*

Behold the Effects of Flattery. *Nero*, who fear'd to return to *Rome*, observing that the Senate and the People paid him greater Honours, then his Flatterers had promis'd; and that the City had set up Scaffolds to behold him make his Entry, as if he had led all the Barbarian Kings in Triumph, began to believe, that his Parricide was lookt upon as a noble Exploit; and that by consequence, there was not any thing which he might not bold-

boldly undertake for the future. Thus when Princes once have laid aside all Fear and Bashfulness, small are the hopes of any farther good from *Them*. And here it was, that *Burrhus* and *Seneca*, both Men of great Prudence and Policy, were much deceiv'd, while they thought, that their condescension to any single Ridiculous Pleasure of their Pupil, would in a short time make him weary of that Vice. For after he had spent his time one while in playing the Charioteer in an enclos'd piece of Ground, where no body had liberty to enter; he would needs have Spectators afterwards, whose Applauses did but serve to encourage him in the continuance of that Exercise, which his Governours were in hopes would soon have tir'd him. In short, after he had been a Charioteer, and had engag'd the Principal of the Nobility to ascend the Theatre, he took his place himself there also, to sing to the Harp before his Courtiers, and the Soldiers of his Guard: Well pleas'd with the Applauses of a company of young *Roman* Knights, who immediately admir'd his Beauty and his Vocie, for Divine Perfections. Whence *Tacitus* concludes, that if Modesty and Bashfulness, be so difficultly

cultly preserv'd by Vertuous Education, how are they possibly to be preserv'd in a Court, where Vices contend and only emulate each other; and where men are only esteem'd for being double Hearted, and they accounted Best, who are the Worst.

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ESSAY XLIII.

**N**O Man carry'd away the Prize for Eloquence, but *Cæsar* was pronounc'd the Victor.

Says D'Ablancourt, *No Man carry'd away the Prize of Eloquence, but they gave the Victory unanimously to the Emperour.*

*Tacitus* relates, That the Funeral Oration which *Nero* pronounc'd at the Obsequies of the Emperour *Claudius*, seem'd to favour of *Seneca's* Stile; which gave an Occasion for some to observe, that *Nero* was the first Emperour that ever stood in need of another mans Eloquence, for that he employ'd his Parts quite another way; as in Painting, Sculpture, Musick, and sometimes in Poetry, to

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which

which he had a great Inclination. Therefore it could be no other then pure Flattery, which adjudg'd him the Prize of Eloquence; as it is the custom to ascribe to Princes all those Qualities, which add to the Lustre of Majesty.

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### ESSAY. LXIV.

**T**HE Temple also erected to Deifie *Claudius*, was look'd upon as the Tower, as *Others will have it*, the Pledge of Perpetual Domination.

Says D'Ablancourt; *The People also look'd upon the Temple dedicated to Claudius, as a Gage of Perpetual Servitude.*

These People, meaning the *Britains*, who were not yet accusom'd to Servitude, finding themselves tyranniz'd over by the *Romans*, without any hopes of being better dealt with for the future, revolted from their forc'd Obedience, cut their Soldiers in pieces, and in two days made themselves Masters of this Temple, which seem'd to have been built for no other



other purpose but to let 'em understand, that their Liberty was exterminated for ever. When Princes subdue great Cities, their Flatterers are the most diligent Persons in the World to erect Magnificent Trophies in their Honour, which rather serve to exasperate the Vanquish'd, then to instruct the Victor what is absolutely necessary for the preservation of his Conquest. Thus the Brazen Statue of the Duke of *Alva* trampling under feet two other lesser Figures, representing the People and Nobility of the Low Countries, cost the King of *Spain* the Revolt of *Antwerp*, and several other fortify'd Cities.

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ESSAY LXV.

**N**ERO then not well in health, when his Flatterers told him, The Empire would be at an end, should it be his Fate to die, made answer, &c.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *One day that he was ill, his Courtiers, in Flattery, told him that the Empire would expire with him.*

This piece of Flattery is a certain proof of the Impertinency of Flatterers. For, for a Man to tell such a Prince as *Nero*, who made it his chiefest Glory, to be an excellent Charioteer, a good Musician, and an elegant Poet, as much as to say, Eminent in every thing that was beneath a Prince, that the Welfare of the Empire depended wholly upon him, and that expiring with his Life, it was never to rise again, was either to laugh at the Emperor, or make himself ridiculous. Nevertheless we meet with Compliments every day altogether as vain and impertinent, which however are kindly accepted. So true is that Remark of *Tacitus*, That Assiduous Adulation corrupts and blinds the understanding of Great Personages.

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## E S S A Y LXVI.

**N**ERO inclin'd to the more Vicious. They assail *Seneca* with various Accusations. They objected his assuming to himself alone the Pre-eminence in Eloquence, and his making Verses more frequently, since  
*Nero*

Nero had addicted himself to the study of Poetry : That he openly exclaim'd against the Prince's Pleasures : That he contemned his Agility in the management of Horses ; and derided his Voice when he sang.

*The Prince (says D' Ablancourt) was naturally inclin'd to follow the worst Counsels. Thereupon it was laid to Seneca's Charge, That he ascrib'd to himself the Glory of being the only Eloquent Person in the City ; and had made Verses more frequently, since Nero began to esteem Poetry. That he forbore not in public to find fault with his Divertisements, and to laugh at his Activities in driving Chariots ; and derided his Excellency in Music.*

When once a Prince begins to lend his Ears to Flatterers, Calumny forthwith makes open War with Men of Vertue. They that accus'd *Seneca*, were certain of over-ruling *Nero* , to his Destruction : For that *Burrhus* and He were always averse to his Pleasures. For the Court is always full of certain People, who make it all their business to sound the Disgusts and Discontentments of Princes, & incense 'em against them who are both

the Object & the Cause of them. And thus it was, that *Sejanus* exasperated *Tiberius* against *Asinius Gallus*, and that *Cossurinus Capito* and *Eprinus Marcellus* perswaded *Nero* to rid himself of *Thrasea*. As to what the Courtiers laid to *Seneca's* Charge, that he ascrib'd to himself the sole Glory of surpassing all others in Eloquence, that was only an Artifice, by which they render'd him so much the more odious to *Nero*, in regard that he, continually making use of him for the composing those Orations and Speeches which he had to make to the Senate, should thereby take notice, that *Seneca* made Merchandize of this Eloquence; while 'twas the general saying, that whatever he spoke or did, either Handsom and Noble, still *Seneca* reap'd all the Honour of it, as being the first Composer. However, that *Nero* was past a Child, and by consequence needed no more Tutors, the Examples of his Ancestors being sufficient to instruct and advise him in the management of his Government. By the way observe, that *Tacitus* seems obliquely to reprove the Vanity, or rather Vain-glory of *Seneca*, in saying, That he caus'd *Nero* to pronounce several Popular Harangues, to shew the good Education which

which he had given his Pupil, or else in Ostentation of his own Wit. So true it is, that the wisest of Men are subject to an ardent love and desire of Glory : And according to the Greek Proverb, *'Tis the last Shirt they put off.*

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ESSAY LXVII.

**T***igellinus* growing daily more powerful, and believing his wicked Artifices, wherein his chiefest Excellencies lay, would prove more acceptable, could he but engage the Prince to be an Accomplice with him in his Crimes, he dives into his Fears, and found that *Plautius* and *Sylla* were the objects of his Terror.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *Tigellinus* grew more and more in Credit every day ; and to render himself yet more considerable, he resolv'd to plunge *Nero* deeper & deeper in Vice, as being the only Craft of which he was the absolute Master. Seeing therefore that the Persons whom the Prince most fear'd, were

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Sylla

*Sylla and Rubellius, he endeavour'd to render their Exile suspected.*

*Rubellius Plantus* and *Cornelius Sylla*, were Persons suspected and dreaded by *Nero* - The first, because he was descended from *Augustus* by the Mothers side, and in the same degree next of Kin to *Nero*; besides that, he was vastly Rich. The second, for that having espous'd *Antonia* the Daughter of *Claudius*, and Sister to *Octavia*, *Nero's* Wife, he seem'd to have some Right, or at least some Pretension to the Empire. For which reason he had procur'd their Exilement, the one being Banish'd into *Asia*, and the other into *Gallia*. But *Nero* (as it is the custome of bad Princes to be prone to Fears and Jealousies) had still the same suspicions of these two Men, notwithstanding the distance of their Confinement: Wherefore *Tigellinus*, who was not ignorant of the innate Cruelty of his Master, and understanding from whence his Jealousies arose, infuses into his mind, That two Persons of such Illustrious Extraction, had the ready opportunity to revenge themselves in their Exile, where they were at hand to debauch both the Eastern and German Armies. That *Nero* might  
secure

secure himself from the Contrivances of his Enemies at *Rome*, where his presence was sufficient to curb the growing Insolencies of Mutiny and Disorder, but that it would be a difficult thing for him to put a stop to Designs well laid in distant Provinces. That the *Gauls* already cast their Eyes upon *Sylla*, as a Noble Branch of the Dictators Family; and that the hopes of *Asia* were no less in the Grand-child of *Drusus*. That *Sylla's* Poverty was a sufficient incitement to push him forward in the prosecution of bold and daring Attempts, and that he only affected a counterfeit Supidity, till he met with an opportunity to shew his Courage. On the other side, that *Plantus* was a Person of prodigious Wealth, and so far from seemiog to love Repose and Quiet, that he took a pride in imitating the Ancient *Romans*, and in practising the Maxims of the Stoicks, a Sect that teaches Men to be arrogant, turbulent, and daring. These are the dangers that attend Great Personages: The Flatterers tell the Prince, that the excessive Wealth of a Subject, is fatal to Domination; that they are too High for the Condition of a Private Person, and over-shadow the Grandeur of a Prince. And therefore it

was, that the Prince of Conde made Answer to a Proposal that was made him, only to beg and have such a Government as he should himself desire, *That he had Wealth and Estate sufficient, to preserve himself by his good Services and Loyalty; that if he had more, it would but render him justly suspected to the King, who could have no other reason to Ruine him, but only because he was too Great.*

If they are Poor, then they are represented to the Prince as Malecontents, who study all opportunities to meliorate their Fortunes at the Expence of the Public Tranquillity; that if they are not prevented, their Misery will hurry 'em to Despair; and their Despair to Revolt; and that therefore there is a necessity to hast'n their Destruction. If they are Persons of mean Parts or little Courage, those Feeblenesses are interpreted to be refin'd Policy and Dissimulation. But if they are Persons of Courage and Merit, then they are branded for Dangerous Persons, that will soon be their Sovereign's Masters, if once admitted to the Helm of State. Or if excluded, that they will meditate Revenge, unless cropt in the budd of their Resentment. *Tacitus* tells us, That *Plautus* led a retir'd Life,



Life, went mean and plain, and kept his Family in good order: But the more he conceal'd himself in privacy from the stratagems of Envy, the more his Reputation expos'd him. Therefore that Philosopher was in the right, who said, *That Great Men were born to afford Subjects for Tragedies.*

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ESSAY. LXVIII.

**A**fter he found that all his Crimes were applauded as Egregious Acts, he turns *Octavia* out of doors, pretending Sterility, and Marries *Poppæa*.

Says D'Ablancourt; *The Emperor finding that all his Crimes were consecrated by the Senate, Divorc'd Octavia, as being Barren, and Esponses Poppæa.*

*Tacitus* tells us, That when the Head of *Plautus* was brought to *Nero*, he thus discours'd to himself! *What fear'st thou Nero, now that Plautus and Sylla are dead? Why dost thou not forthwith Esponse Poppæa, and send Octavia home again, tho' she be truly*

*truly Complaisant and Modest, but yet a burthen to thee, for the sake of her Father's Memory, and the affection of the People?*

*Nero* dur'st not repudiate her while *Sylla* her Father-in-Law was alive, and *Plantus* her near Kinsman, who might have reveng'd her Quarrel. But so soon as these Obstacles were remov'd, he never scrupl'd to dissolve a Marriage that had advanc'd him to the Empire. So true it is, that bad Princes cannot endure the sight of those to whom they are too deeply oblig'd. Now *Nero* could not see *Octavia*, without recalling to mind those Obligations which he had receiv'd from her Father, who had preferr'd him before *Britannicus* his only Son; and therefore it was that the Memory of *Claudius* was offensive to his Mind. Moreover the Marriage of *Nero* with *Poppaea*, is a clear demonstration, that when once a bad Prince is rid of his Fears, he lays aside his Shame as soon.

## ESSAY LXIX.

**O**CTAVIA is commanded to die—— And to this, a Scorn more hainous then the Cruelty was added, that *Poppæa* saw her Head cut off, and brought into the City. For this, Gifts were decreed to be offer'd to the Temples of the Gods: Which I have on purpose deliver'd to Posterity, that whoever shall read the Story of those Times, whether written by our selves, or any other Author, may understand, that so often as any Murther was commanded by the Prince, Thanks were return'd to the Gods; and those things which were formerly the Signals of prosperous Success and Triumph, were now the Concomitants of Public Desolation.

Says D'Ablancourt; *He commanded Octavia to die—— And for an addition of Cruelty, they cut off her Head, to glut the*  
the

*the greedy eyes of her Rival. The Senate for this ordain'd, that Offerings should be made in the Temples: Which I mention'd to this end, that They who shall hereafter read this History, may understand, that as often as the Prince had perpetrated any Crime; so often Thanks were return'd to the Gods; and that that which was formerly a Mark of our Triumphs, was become the Witness of our Miseries.*

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## ESSAY LXX.

**B**UT the Child dying within fourth Months, new Flatteries repay'd that Loss, while the Senate decreed the Infant the Honour of a Goddess, a Cushion of State, a Temple, and a Priestess.

*Says D'Ablancourt; The Child dy'd four Months after, which made 'em have recourse to new Flatteries; so that they decreed her a Temple, with Divine Honours, and all things thereto belonging.*

*Nero having honour'd the Infant with the Title of Augusta, upon the day of her-*

her Birth, which was a thing for which there was no President before, the Senate, according to the custome of Flattery, which always strives to exceed, would also needs decree her Divine Honour, that had never yet been given to any Infant. For when the Prince himself opens the way to Flattery, the Contention then runs high among the Croud of Flatterers, who shall bear away the Prize, especially when he is under the pangs of Affliction: For that being the time, when Tenderness and Compassion softens the haughty humours of Men, it affords the most proper opportunities to conquer their Affections.

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ESSAY LXXI.

**C***Erealis Anicius*, the Consul Elect, pronounc'd as his peculiar Sentence, that a Temple should be erected with all the speed imaginable, at the Public Charge, to *Divine NERO*. Which he decreed him, as having surmounted Human Grandeur, and deserving now the Adoration

ration of Men. Which was afterwards number'd among inauspicious Omens of his Death; for the Honours due to the Gods, were never attributed to the Prince, till he ceas'd to live among Men.

Says D'Ablancourt; Anicius Cerealis propounded the building him a Temple at the Publick Charge, and in his Proposal gave him the Title of a God, meaning thereby, that he was exalted above Human Frailty, and deserv'd to be ador'd by Men. But that was afterwards taken as an ill Omen of his Death, for that the Emperors were never honour'd with that Title, till they were departed out of this World.

Nero having escap'd a Conspiracy, wherein were engag'd almost all the chief Nobility of Rome, and with them, Persons of all sorts and conditions, and many Women among the rest, the Senate decreed Thanksgivings and Offerings to the Gods, and particular Honours to the Sun, who had discover'd the Enterprize, just as it was ready to have been put in execution; and to *Salus* or *Safety*, out of whose Temple the Senator *Sevinus* had

had taken the Dagger, with which he was to have given the first stroke: All this was done in Honour to the Gods, and had been highly commendable, had not *Nero* been so wicked a Prince. But that there might be nothing wanting of addition to the Public Misfortune, (for to use the words of *Tacitus*, the Gods, in preserving *Nero*, plainly shew'd, that they design'd their Vengeance, not their Saving Favour to the *Roman* People) one of the Consuls propos'd the Consecrating of a Temple to *NERO THE GOD*, as if he meant the World should understand, that the Emperor was beholden for his Deliverance to his Deify'd condition, which exalted him above all Accidents of Fortune, and render'd him Immortal. Certainly this was the utmost extent of human Adulation, above which it was impossible for human Wit to soar a Higher strain. And if 'twere Fear which made the Gods, a Pagan might have been excus'd to Deifie a Prince, who after he had murther'd his Brother *Britannicus*, his Mother, his Wife, his Tutor, seem'd only born to exterminate the Race of Human kind. But how shall we excuse those Christians, who make profession of Vertue in its purity, and particularly of Evan-

Evangelic Simplicity, who abandon themselves to that degree of Flattery, as to compare a Temporal Prince to the True God, ascribing to him those Attributes which the Sacred Scripture only gives to the Majesty of Heaven. As if among so many Famous and Renowned Actions with which the Universe rings, they could not have found Matter for the most Noble Panegyric in the World, without robbing God of that which incommunicably belongs to Him, to give it to *Cesar*.

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## ESSAY LXXII.

**H**ENCE the Orators took occasion to spend all their Studies upon Panegyrics and Encomiums in honour of the Prince. The Earth (cry'd they) produces not only her usual Fruits, and Gold confus'd with other Metals, but as if infertiliz'd by Thy Rays with a new access of Plenty, teems with unaccustom'd Productions, while the Gods throw down their obvious Riches



Riches to encrease her Store. With several other servile Raptures, compos'd with no less Eloquence than Adulation, as being secure of the Credulity of their Hearers.

Says D'Ablancourt; *The Orators made choice of no other Themes for their Panegyrics, crying out, that the Earth produc'd not only Fruits and Flowers, or Metals within its bowels, but from her bosome discover'd new Treasures, to augment the felicity of so flourishing a Reign. With many other things of the same nature, which their own servile Inclinations, and the Prince's Credulity, produc'd with as much Eloquence as Flattery.*

Princes are the more easily induc'd to flatter themselves with the enjoyment of those successes with which Adulation soothes their Fancies, as being made believe that all things must be obedient to their Fortune; and that there is no contending with their Fate. Nero therefore, who naturally coveted things the most incredible, with ease gave credit to his own Wishes; and his Courtiers were no less careful how they undeceiv'd him, seeing how lavish and profuse he was in his

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Expences, in hopes of *Dido's* pretended Treasures.

Thus it is, that unwary Princes are frequently abus'd and gull'd by their Flatterers, impoverishing their Treasures by immense Profusions, while they feed 'em with vain Expectations. For his expectancy of promis'd Wealth, was one of the causes of publick Poverty. 'Tis the course of Flatterers still to be buzzing in the Sovereign's Ears, that Princes should never mind good Husbandry; whereas they should have told 'em, they could not be well too thrifty, considering there is no end of their Expences.

The Favourites of *Hen. 3.* (says *Mezeray* in his Life) had instill'd into his mind, that all the Estates of his Subjects were absolutely at his disposal; and that *France* was such an inexhaustible Fountain of Wealth, that no Prodigality whatever could draw it dry. But this ill Advice, and worse bad Husbandry (says he) caus'd such scarcity of Money, that many times there was not sufficient to defray the Expences of the King's Kitchen.

ESSAY LXXIII.

**S**OME there were who admonish'd him to make *Cæsar* his Heir of the greatest part of his Estate, which would be the way to preserve the rest for his Grand-children. Which he refus'd to do, that he might not tarnish with servile condescension a Life that he had lead, the nearest that might be to Liberty—— And (speaking of *Petronius*) neither would he Flatter in his Will either *Cæsar*, or *Tigellinus*, or any of the Great Men then in Favour.

Says D'Ablancorut ; *Some advis'd him to leave the best part of his Estate to the Emperor, and to save the rest ; but he reply'd, That after he had liv'd so long in Honour, he would not sully the end of his Life with a servile Act—— Nor would Petronius Flatter in his Will, either Nero, or Tigellinus, or any other of the Favourites, as most of those there that suffer'd had done.*

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They who never committed any degenerate Act in their life-time, are careful to preserve their Reputation to the last gasp. Nor can there be a smarter incentive to die like a Man of Honour, then to have always been so. Therefore *Cocceius Nerva*, the best Friend *Tiberius* had, seeing that the Emperor grew more vicious every day then other, while his Health & Estate were yet in a good condition, and his Reputation unblemish'd, chose to die. And *Thrasea*, whom *Tacitus* calls the Patern of true Honour, made answer to those who advis'd him to delay his Death, That he had nothing more to do but to die as he had liv'd; that is to say, untainted, unpolluted, and imitating the glorious *Exit* of those whom he had emulated in his life-time. For it is not enough for Great Personages to be distinguish'd from Others by the Magnificence of their Funerals, unless at their Deaths they likewise leave a distinct remembrance to Posterity.

## ESSAY LXXIV.

**T**Ruth was several ways ecclips'd and interrupted ; first through ignorance of Public Affairs, now mannag'd by a few ; then by the contagious lust of Adulation, or else by the general hatred of those that were in Power. So that what between those that were Disgusted, and those that were Obnoxious, there was no care taken of Posterity. But 'tis easie for thee to discry and ward off the Flatteries of a Historian ; tho' Detraction and Envy are heard with willing Ears. For there is a kind of resemblance between the foul Crime of Servility and Adulation, but in Malignity, there seems to be some similitude of Liberty. We cannot deny our Preferment begun by *Vespasian*, augmented by *Tiberius*, and farther advanc'd by *Domitian* ; but they that pretend to

to an inviolate Fidelity, must never be sway'd by the Affections either of Love or Hatred.

*Truth, Says D'Ablancourt, was clouded and obscur'd through ignorance of Public Affairs, wherein few were concern'd; and sophisticated either by Flattery or Hatred. The Historians took no care of Posterity, minding only their Revenge or their Preferment. But tho' Flattery and Obloquie both equally disguise the Truth, it is more easie for a Man to secure himself from the one which is odious to all the World, then from the other, which deceives us under the false shew of Liberty. 'Tis true, I owe the first rise of my Fortune to Vespasian, and the progress of my Advancement to his Children. But when a Man once goes about to write a History, he must forget Favours as well as Injuries. Wherein D'Ablancourt mistakes the words of Tacitus, who says no such thing, but only that no Historian should suffer himself to be byass'd, either by his Love or by his Hatred.*

Were it absolutely necessary for a Historian to understand not only the Events of things, but also the Reason and Cause

Causes which produc'd those Events; it would be impossible for any Man to be a good Historian, that never had any share in the mannagement of Public Affairs. For the Success and Events of things are known to all the World, but the Motives, the Interests, the Accidents, the Springs, that enliven'd, mov'd, and manag'd those Affairs, and were the Causes of their prosperous accomplishments or miscarriage, are only known to the Contrivers and Artificers themselves. And for that Reason it is, that Historians of Republics have more advantage to write the Truth of things, then the Subjects of Sovereign Monarchs: Where the Secret lies lockt up in the Breast or Cabinet of the Prince, so that they may be well call'd strangers to the Government.

The second thing which disguises and disfigures History is Flattery, which in Republics is but little practiz'd, where Servility is incompatible with Equality: But is of absolute use in Monarchies, where it is hard to attain to Honours and Employments, or long to enjoy 'em, but by gaining the favour of the Ruling Sovereign, by the customary and usual ways of Assentation and Obsequiousness.

The third Rock that Shipwracks Truth, is Hatred; which takes place of Flattery, after the Decease of the Prince. So long as *Tiberins*, *Caligula*, *Claudius*, and *Nero* Reign'd, says *Tacitus*, Fear disguis'd and ecclips'd the Truth, but so soon as they were Dead, Hatred publish'd with aggravations, what Fears suppress'd before. Whence we may infer, that the Histories of bad Princes, are never faithfully Written, neither when they are Alive, as being dreaded then; nor after their Decease, when Calumny takes her full swinge to disgrace their Memories. When Princes are hated, men are willing to believe whatever is reported of 'em, tho' never so hainous and horrid; nay, many things too, which are altogether impossible. And for this Reason it is, that *Tacitus* desires of those that shall read his Works, never to prefer vulgar Reports and Tales Incredible, tho' greedily swallow'd, before plain and downright Truths, not yet corrupted into miracle. There are some Historians that seem to have no other design, then to abuse Posterity, transmitting to future Ages, Things not to be believ'd. And some Persons there are, so unjust and empty in their Judgments,



ments, that no Histories will please their Appetite, but such as are stuff'd with Scandals and Absurdities. And this proneness of the one to Credulity, and of the other to Falshood it is, which is the occasion that all Affairs of Importance are communicated to our understandings, quite otherwise then as they were really transacted. Add to this, that many times they who have been the mannagers of these Affairs, and encourage the Author of the Story, having sometimes acted by the sway of bad Principles, furnish the Writer with Memorials, so far from discovering the real Truth, that they rather stifle it in those politic Ambiguities, from whence it is impossible to Disinvelop it. Whence it comes to pass, that the Historians themselves being first deceiv'd, the Reputation of their Fidelity serves only to delude others. Moreover the severity of History is such, as not to suffer that her Authors should discover the least resentment of Injuries or Favours; She would be shown to the World without Hatred or Flattery; without Fear or Hope; without refin'd Subtlety or Affectation; not to Criticise, but to Instruct; nor to kindle

any hatred against the men themselves,  
but a detestation of their Vices.

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## ESSAY. LXXV.

**A** Felicity of the Times but rarely known, when it was lawful to think what ever thou wouldst; and what thy Thoughts were, those to utter freely.

Says D'Ablancourt, *A Subject more Ample and less Thornie, upon which a Man might fearless utter whatsoe're he thought, which was no small Happiness.*

Court Flatterers observe this for a certain Maxime, Never to speak what they think, but always to speak what they never think, or at least never intend. And thence it is, that Princes being accustomed to understand 'em, those Persons that are Sincere and Real-hearted, are at a Nonplus how to please their Humours, and by consequence to make their Fortunes. Besides, 'tis no such Errour in Princes, as generally the Common sort believe,

believe, not always to favour and esteem those Persons, who freely and frankly speak their own Thoughts. For besides, that freedom of Speech approaches too near forbidden Licence, it is also no less subject to heighten into Imprudent Zeal, which frequently leaves behind most mortal stings in the nice Breasts of Princes. The simplicity of the *Dove* at Court signifies nothing, if it be not manag'd by the wisdom of the *Serpent*.

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ESSAY LXXVI

**P**rosperity and Success, with sharper Probes, explore the Minds of Men; for Miseries are endur'd, but we are corrupted by Felicity. Thou perhaps wilt retain thy Fidelity, thy Liberty, thy Friendship, the chiefest blessings and perfections of the Mind; but others will endeavour to vitiate thy good Nature by their Flatteries. Adulation, and glozing Sycophantries, the most pernicious poyson of a vertuous

Inclination, while every one seeks his own Profit and Interest, will break in upon thee. Thou and I discourse this day together with Sincerity and Cordial Integrity, others more willingly address themselves to our Fortune then to us. For to persuade a Prince to what it behoves him to do, is a task of great difficulty. But to Flatter any Prince, there's no Affection requir'd. To be Begotten or Descend from Princes is meerly Fictitious, nor is valu'd any farther. *Nero* will be also always wish'd for by the worst of Men; however it must be both Our Cares, that he be not wish'd for by the Good and Vertuous. But this is not a time to insist longer upon Admonitions. The most profitable and the shortest Method in the regulation of thy Actions, is to consider what thou wouldst require, and what not, from another Prince. For thou art now to Govern a People that will not brook an

an Absolute Servitude, add will be as impatient of Absolute Liberty.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Prosperity has more powerful Incentives then Adversity, for we give way to the one and resist the other.* (Which words are more obscure then the Text it self.) *Tho' thy Inclinations prompt thee to preserve thy Vertue, they that have access to thee, will have lost their own.* (Which is quite contrary to the sense of Tacitus.) *There is nothing so easie as Complaisance, and therefore all Men are ready to make use of it. But there are few Persons that advise Princes what they ought to do, because it is a Task of too great difficulty.* (Here also is the sense of Tacitus again mistaken.) *'Tis by Fortune that Men are born Sovereign Princes.* (Here again Tacitus expresses himself more at large.) *Only, Do thou learn that the shortest way to Govern well, is to consider what is to be Approv'd, and what Condemn'd in other Princes; to avoid the one, and follow the example of the other.* (Which latter words are superfluous.) *Never were more Noble, nor more Universal Admonitions given to Princes, to guard themselves from the contagion of Flattery. Here they are warn'd, that Prosperity runs 'em headlong into more Impieties then Adver-*

for that it usually plunges 'em into all manner of *Luxury*, and all that *Tacitus* calls the *Licence of Regality*. Which was the Reason of that Saying of *Tiberius* himself, That the more *Puissant* he was, the more in danger he was of *Falling*; and that he could not have his *Authority*, without *Diminishing* the *Law*.

Thus what *Galba* says to *Piso*, that the obsequious Respect which all men would pay to his Person would corrupt his *Vertue*, is a wholesom Admonition which he gives to all Princes, not to confide in the constancy of their own Resolutions, nor in their natural inclination to Justice, in regard that if they bow their Ears to their Flatterers, Adulation by vertue of her alluring Blandishments, will glide at length through the Ears into the Heart, and tear from thence all Shame, all Moderation, Docility, Gratitude, Clemency, and all other Vertues whatever that harbours there. *Mezeray* gives us a remarkable Example of this, in the Person of *Henry III.* His Reign, saith he in his Life, might be call'd the Reign of Favorites (and consequently of Flatterers) they brought to perfection their Design, and absolutely Enervated whatever he had of constant

stant Resolution, and at length dissolv'd him into all Voluptuousness. And that they might possess him wholly to themselves, they persuaded him not to shew himself so frequently and so publicly to his Subjects as his Predecessors had done, but to keep himself reserv'd and close like the Eastern Monarchs; or if he did at any time appear among 'em, that it should be with all the dazling Pomp and Magnificence imaginable, or else to let 'em know him by the Absoluteness of his Commands; but above all, to break the Neck of that Custom among the French of making Remonstrances, and to make 'em understand that there was no other Justice but his Will. (For according to the Dictates of Flattery, 'tis but a precarious Reign, and an Acquiescence in single Authority, which extends it self no farther, then only Things permitted.) With these Flatteries they rais'd him to a high Opinion of himself, and fill'd him with a Conceit, that he was the Greatest Prince in the World: That all the Politics of his very Youth, were Master pieces; and that all the Prudence of the most Cunning Artists in that Profession, was but meer Ignorance in comparison of his.

Nor is there any Prince whatever, to whom at least some of their Flatterers do not say as much: A sufficient demonstra-

tion that they speak not to the Person, but the Fortune of the Prince, which is the sole object of their Adorations. As for the advantage of being born a Prince, *Galba* tells *Piso* 'twas only an accident of Fortune, to let him understand, that it was not an Honour to be so highly glory'd in by Princes, as being that which they receiv'd from another, and was no Honour to 'em farther, then they gave it lustre by the brightness of their own Vertue. They that told *Nero* he needed no other Rule whereby to govern himself then the Examples of his Ancestors, while they Flatter'd him with the greatness of his Birth, did but give him an oblique hint, that having *Augustus* for his Great Grand-father, and *Germanicus* for his Grand-father, it best became him to derive his Glory from the Imitation of those two Persons: For it is not Nobility of Extraction that makes a Prince. *Caligula*, *Claudius*, and *Nero*, were all Illustrious by Descent, but Scandals to the Empire and the Family of the *Cæsars*. Neither is it the vast extent of Dominion that makes an Emperour; but on the contrary 'tis rather a Burthen, which only serves to display the Weakness of the Prince, and by consequence to render him



him Contemptible, when he is found to be incapable of Government. Witness *Galba*, who when he came to the Empire, through his want of Parts, lost all the Reputation which he had acquir'd, while he was only Governour of a Province; whom all Men would have judg'd most fit for the Imperial Dignity, unless he had Reign'd.

A Prince therefore is never to be accounted a Great Prince, unless the glory of his Merit be equal to those of his Fortune. Historians, says *Matchiavel*, gave greater Applauses to *Hiero* of *Syracuse*, while he was but as yet a private Person, then to *Perseus*, when he was King of *Macedon*; for that *Hiero* wanted nothing but a Kingdom to be a Prince, whereas the other had nothing in him of a King, but his Kingdom. An Argument, that Posterity considers neither Royal Birth, nor Royalty it self, as not deserving its Esteem, but how the Prince manag'd his Affairs, and carry'd himself in so high and difficult an Employment. And in this sense it was, that *Tiberius* pray'd the Gods to grant him a quiet Mind to the end of his Life, and all necessary Understanding of the Law of God and Man, that after his Decease, his  
Name

Name and his Actions might be Honour'd with the remembrance and approbation of all his Subjects. Observe by the way, that in the same place he tells the Senate, how highly Honour'd should he deem himself, if Posterity do him but that Justice to acknowledge him for a Prince worthy his Ancestors, Vigilant, Resolute in Dangers, and Zealous for the Public Welfare, fearless of Envy or Hatred. To inform those who are Born Princes, that it ought to be their chiefest Ambition to shew themselves worthy of their Illustrious Extraction, in performing glorious Actions, deserving the Remembrance of all succeeding Ages. And this was that which *Octavius* himself confirm'd, when his Mother and his Father in Law dissuading him, to acknowledge himself Heir to *Julius Caesar*, he rejected their Counsel, affirming, 'twould be a shame for him to think himself above a Fortune that *Caesar* thought him worthy of: To whose Opinion he would rather stand then theirs, who understood not his Worth. But to return to *Galba*.

*Nero*, said he, will be always lamented and wish'd for by the Wicked; but it must be our Duty so to behave our selves that good Men too, may have no reason  
to

to lament his loss; *which certainly they will do, if we prove no better than He.* This is an Admonition so much the more necessary for Princes, in regard that Flatterers, by applauding their Actions whether good or bad, and by infusing a Conceit into their minds, that they surpass all their Predecessors, make 'em sometimes worse than they, whose memories are become most odious. 'Tis a burdensom thing to succeed a Vertuous Prince, says *Pliny* in his *Panegyric*, in regard it is a difficult labour to gain that Affection which he had done. Which was the Reason that the younger *Pliny* told *Trajan*, that no Body would covet to Succeed him, because no Body could presume to equal him. But it is no less dangerous to succeed a bad Prince; for instead of this happy Effect, that the vertue of a Predecessor should serve to enflame the Emulation of him that succeeds, it happens that while he fears to be despis'd or hated upon the neglect of his Duty, the Vices of the Predecessor seem to authorise, or at least excuse the the miscarriages of the succeeding Prince. Whence it happens that the latter, not having any recent Example of moderation to upbraid his Liberties, and check  
his

his Irregularities, he throws of his Mask, and abandons himself to all manner of Luxury and Impiety, insomuch that his Predecessor, though he had been very inordinate, is many times recall'd again in wishes for a good Prince. Thus the loss of *Tiberius* was bewail'd in the Reign of *Caligula*, *Caligula* in the Reign of *Nero*, and *Nero* in the Reign of *Domitius*: So true it is, that wickedness finds out new Rivals every day, especially among bad Princes, that suffer themselves to be guided by their Flatterers; that bad Examples can never stop their career, when once they have begun; but that when once they are stray'd out of the high Road, they never stop till they precipitate themselves into an Abyss of all Disorders.

Lastly, says *Galba*, if thou wouldst know in short, what method is most proper to gain the Esteem and Love of the People over which thou art to Rule, call to thy remembrance whatever has been applauded or condemn'd in the Princes that have Reign'd in thy time, and then do thou of thy own accord, as formerly *Mecenas* advis'd *Augustus*, so manage the conduct of thy Rule, as thou wouldst expect another Prince should do, wert thou a Subject to the same Person.

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The Younger *Pliny* commends *Trajan* for his observance of this Precept. Long hast thou liv'd among us (said he) and ventur'd with us through the same danger, and thereby thou giv'st us an apparent demonstration, that thou art not forgetful of the Wishes and Complaints which thou weret wont to make among us, for in thy Sovereignty dost thou fulfil, whatever thou didst once desire so ardently, when a private Subject; only with this difference, that thou art more benign and clement toward us, then thou didst then desire the Prince should be moderate toward thy Self. And thence, whereas before we wisht for no other happiness, then to have a Prince but somewhat better then the worst of all that ever we had (speaking of *Domitian*) we are now, by thy means, become so nice and difficult, that we cannot endure any other then the Best of Emperors.

And in several other parts of the same Panegyric, Thou mak'st the choice of thy Friends, among the most Vertuous; and truly it is but just, that they should be belov'd by a good, who have been hated by a wicked Prince. Thou know'st the difference between Domination & Supreme Rule, which is the reason that they who are now most acceptable to the Prince, have the greatest Antipathy to a Tyrannical Master. Thou know'st, that there  
can

can be no Power so great conferr'd on any single Person, but that Liberty still is more desirable then Masterless Superiority. And yet so far art thou from triumphing over our Patience, that thy Triumphs are only o'er the pride of wicked Princes. Thou liv'st among us like a Father with his Children. 'Tis lawfull to approach thy presence, to accompany, and speak to thee. Nor is it thy Pride that puts a conclusion to the Discourse, but a modest shame and fear of being too importunate. Thou Govern'st us, and we Obey, but yet no otherwise then we Obey the Laws. Thou hast barr'd up the passage to thy Ears against greedy Sycophants, who excited thy Predecessors to nothing but Rapine and Violence. And now there being no such Prince that will afford a ready Ear to pernicious Counsels, there are none that now will undertake to give it. Insomuch that being highly oblig'd to Thee, for the Integrity of thy Manners, we are yet more engag'd to thy Vertues, for the amendment of our own, which the Servility of former Times had so horribly perverted. So powerful is the Example of a Vertuous Prince, whether out of that veneration which all Men pay him, or the desire which we have to please him in our Imitation.

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ESSAY LXXVII.

**P***iso's* Oration was modest and civil; nor did he want the Favour of the *Father's*; many out of pure good will and affection; more vehemently they that least desired it; the Middle sort, and the Moderate party were the most, all meditating private Interest, while obviously obsequious without Care of the Public.

Says D'Ablancourt; *Piso's Oration was very modest, and receiv'd with applause by the Flattery of some, and the Affection of others. They who had the least desire, testify'd the most, and every one suffer'd himself to be busy'd by his particular Interest, without any Care of the Republic.*

A new Prince always occasions the growth of new Interests, new Expectations, and new Sycophants. And Flattery was the more excessive toward *Piso*, while every one believ'd that Sycophantry could not choose but be acceptable to

a Person who had always been the Mark of Adverse Fortune. For there is nothing so lulling to the Sences, as to be Flatter'd, Carefs'd and Honour'd, after a Man has been a long time Unfortunate. And for that reason it was that *Galba*, putting him in mind of his former condition, *Hitherto* (said he) *thou hast only experimented the Cruelties of Fortune ; now she begins to look upon thee with a favourable Eye : However be sure to stand upon thy Guard, for it is more easie constantly to undergo Adversity, as thou hast done, then to resist Allurements of Prosperity, so ingenious in depraving our Inclinations.* 'Tis not to be question'd but that thou art a Person of great Vertue, but if once thou giv'st admission to Flattery, she will soon impair thy Vertue. These and such like were *Galba's* Expressions (says *Tacitus*) to *Piso*, as to a Private Person, whom he was about to make an Absolute Prince, but all the rest he spoke as to a Prince already Enthron'd. To let us understand that *Galba* spoke to the Person of the Prince, whereas Sycophants make their Addresses only to his Fortune : That the first Admonish'd him, as a Father and a Prince ; but that others Flatter'd him, as the Person that already was their Lord and Master : That Subjects are only capable of

Flattery,



Flattery, because they only seek to please; whereas the Prince who makes his Choice of a Successor, bespeaks him cordially and sincerely, and gives him no other then only the best of Counsel.

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ESSAY LVXXIII.

**T**HE most Favour'd of his enfranchiz'd Slaves, and other Servants, laid before him the Pomp of Nero's Court, his Luxury, his Adulteries, his Divorces, and incestuous Wedlocks, and all those other Pleasures of Imperial Reign, all which he thirst'd after, and which if he had the Courage, were his own; but if he trifled away his Opportunity, would be another's.

*His principal Domesticks, (says D' Ablancourt) ceas'd not to lay before him the Luxury and Licence of Princes, and to upbraid him secretly, for abandoning to another, that which was in his power to seize as his own.*

Thus

Thus we see the gay Allurements that Sycophants make use of to provoke the Appetites of Princes, and incense 'em to Luxury. This is that which they call, *Releasing Kings from the Subjection of Wardship*; but indeed (says *Mezeray*) *Is the putting them beside their Sences and their Reason*. *Otho* had spent his Youth in Debauchery, and had insinuated himself into *Nero's* Favour and Confidence, by the imitation of his Voluptuousness and Vices. *Piso*, on the other side, had always liv'd a sober Life, and without Scandal, but the severity of his Manners, which pleas'd *Galba*, displeas'd the old Court, which *Nero* had accustom'd to honour a Voluptuous Prince, no less then formerly they were wont to reverence a Prudent and Moderate Sovereign. Therefore it was that *Otho*, who was of the same temper with *Nero*, and as such a one, desir'd by all the Courtiers, was so highly encourag'd by his Domestics, and his Friends, to take Possession of the Empire. For the looser and more extravagant sort of Courtiers are afraid of nothing more then a Vertuous and Vigilant Prince, because their Interest is incompatible with his Duty. *The young King* (says *Mezeray*, speaking of *Charles VIII.*) *was naturally*

rally inclin'd to the Study of Vertue, addicting himself, as much as his leisure would permit him, to the reading of good Authors, and to converse with learned Men. But the Sycophant, to whose humour, a serious and prudent Prince is a burthensom Master, before the Tear was out, plung'd him again into the love of Toys and Women.

I find moreover two or three things more to be observ'd upon the Choice which Galba made of Piso to succeed him, rather than Otho, who being the first who had declar'd himself for Galba, was in hopes to have been adopted for his Son. The first is, that Galba rather chose to expose himself to Otho's Resentment, to whom he was so highly oblig'd, then to advance to the Empire a Person, who was guilty of all Nero's Vices; considering, that would be of little benefit to the Publick-weal to have escap'd Nero's Violencies, should it relapse under the power of his Companion in Debauchery. The second thing is, that Vertuous Princes make it their chiefest Glory to choose a good Successor; whereas a bad Prince endeavours to find a worse than himself, to the end he may be miss'd, when gone. Augustus (said Galba to Piso) made Choice of a Successor out of his own Family, but I choose

choose mine out of the Commonwealth: Not that I am destitute either of Kindred or Friends, but because of all my own and thine, thou seem'st to me most worthy to be the Heir of my Fortune. My Age permits me not to do the Roman People any other kindness, but only to leave them a Vertuous Successor. But thou who art in the flower of thy Youth, hast it within thy power to bless 'em with a Vertuous Prince and long Tranquility. The Younger Pliny tells us, that Nerva was belov'd and lamented by all good Men, for that he had made such Provision, that no body should have cause to miss him, and being a most worthy Prince himself, he was not afraid to make Choice of one that might exceed him. And in another Place he says, That a good Successor is a most evident Mark of the Divinity of the Prince that makes the Election.

The last thing is, the difference between the Advice which Princes give to their Successors, and that which Sycophants give to Princes. When a Prince admonishes another, 'tis his usual custom to tell him, that Sovereignty is a weighty Burthen, and a Condition above all others most subject to the Capriccio's of Fortune: That the Higher a man is exalted, the more in danger he stands of the Precipice:

That

That Power is never truly secure, when excessive, and rarely longer permanent than the Life of him that exercises it: That there is nothing in the World so unstable, or so difficult to preserve, as the Fame of Power that rests not on its proper foundation, of Justice and Reason: That it is impossible for a Prince to know or act all things himself, and therefore had need of good Counsel and Assistance: That his Ministers and He, transacting unanimously together, the Public Affairs will be better manag'd: That he ought not to study Dominion over Slaves, but equal Government over Children and Subjects accusom'd to rational and not to blind Obedience: That Loyal Subjects never grudge to pay Taxes or Impositions, but ill brook the Violence, the Cruelty and Avarice of the Officers: That a Government cannot long subsist between unjust Command and forc'd Obedience. I do not Interest my self, said *Tiberius*, in the Choice of Edils, Pretors or Consuls; something greater and more sublime is expected from a Prince; nor do I make use of Power, where I can act by Law. Then he goes on, that Liberality, when excessive, proves pernicious, as forcing to repair by Injustice, what Extravagancy has

has dissipated; That Clemency advances the Reputation of Princes; and that having all things at their Command, there remains nothing for them to desire more, then only to Eternize their Happy Memories. These are the Temples, those the Noble Statues, said *Tiberius*, that I desire to be erected in your minds; for as for those that are built of Stone, should I deserve the hatred of succeeding Ages, they would be scorn'd, and soon defac'd.

On the other side, Sycophants infuse into the ears of Princes, that they have not only an Absolute Power, but a Universal Understanding, and that their Subjects can pretend to nothing but only the Honour of a blind Obedience: That the Will and Pleasure of a Prince, is the Rule of Justice, and by consequence, that all the Actions of Kings are Infallibly Just: That a Prince who Governs according to Laws, is only a Precarious Prince; and that he who listens to the Advice of his Counsel, is a Pupil: That all ways and means whatever which conduce to the preservation of Authority, are honest and lawful, provided they be successful: That the Impov'ring of the People, and keeping the Nobility Low, are the main Pillars of Imperial Power. That  
Privi-

Privileges, Exemptions and Moderate Taxes serve only to render the People untractable and mutinous; whereas they are supple, submissive and yielding, when they have nothing to lose: That Luxury, Adulteries, Revelling and choice of Women, are the Rewards of Principality: That it is of little importance to be belov'd, but of great moment to be fear'd; for that Fear is supported by the dread of Punishment, which never ceases; but that Love is preserv'd only by a certain tie of Complaisance, which Men as often break, as fancy and humour inspire 'em: That Clemency is a dangerous Vertue, and Modesty fitting only for a Citizens Wife. And lastly, That Princes never need take any care what Posterity says of 'em, as being no competent Judge of the Truth or Falshood of those that applaud or discommend, since 'tis the Fate of Historians, to be always suspected either of Flattery or Malice.

## E S S A Y LXXIX.

**T**Hen from all Parts of the City, as *Othonians* met *Othonians*, some augmented the general Fears, others minc'd the Truth, not then refraining from their wonted Adulation.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *People crowd'd together from all Parts of the City, some augmenting the danger, others lessening it as much, not forgetting their usual Flattery even in that extremity.*

*Otho* was Proclaim'd Emperor, and *Galba* now no longer in Possession of the Sovereignty ; nevertheless there were some People that Flatter'd the Unfortunate Prince, as if after he had lost the Empire, he had something of higher Advantage to lose. An evident proof, that Sycophants never can find in their hearts to speak sincerely to Princes ; and that Princes are Flatter'd, because 'tis the Mode, without the least anxiety for their good



good or ill success. Sycophants never tell 'em any thing but what is grateful, tho' it be ne'er so prejudicial. They who sooth'd up *Galba* at such a Conjunction, when the preservation of the Imperial Dignity, and his Life lay at stake, were so much the more to blame, in regard they knew that *Galba* was always desirous that the Truth should be told him, as one that detested Flattery; and that his Safety then depended upon true Intelligence of the imminent danger. But in short, it is the Fate of Princes to be deluded, even to the last minute of their Lives. *Mezeray* tells us, That after the *French* had lost the Castle of *St. Angelo*, between *Padua* and *Milaine* the most prudent Captains (and particularly *Lewis de la Tremouille*) were of opinion, that *Francis* the First should raise his Siege, laying before him, That his Army was wasted a third part more then he was made believe it was; that five thousand *Grisons* had deserted him, under pretence of going to defend their own Country against the *Milaneses*, who perhaps with their connivance, had taken *Clavenna* from them; and that the Enemies Army, for want of Pay, would certainly Disband within fifteen days at farthest. But those Reasons were not of force

sufficient to alter his Resolutions. The Syco-  
phantries of his Favowrites, over-rul'd the  
Counsels of his Experienc'd Captains. And  
that was the reason that his Enemies, not able  
any longer to keep their Forces in a Body re-  
solv'd to give the King Battel; who was  
there taken Prisoner, together with the Chief  
Nobility of the Kingdom. So that it was  
held for Prophetical, what a Jester told  
the King, when he had concluded upon  
the War of Italy: Sir (said he) your  
Counsellors seem to me, to be a company of  
Fools. They say very true, that your Ma-  
jesty shall enter Italy; but they do not tell  
you how you shall get out again.

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## E S S A Y LXXX.

**I** Shall not boast of my Nobility  
or Moderation (said *Piso* to the  
Pretorians,) nor is there any nece-  
sity for me to dispute my Vertues in  
competition with *Otho*. His Vices,  
in which he only glories, ruin'd the  
Empire, even then, when he acted  
*Nero's* Friend.

Says D'Ablancourt; *There was no need  
for*

for him to urge his *Vertues* there, nor those of his *Ancestors*, in comparison with *Otho's* vices, which had ruin'd the Empire, when he was no more then a private Person. But this does not express the sense of Tacitus (*Com amicum Imperatiniis Agecet*) by which he plainly gives us to understand, that *Otho* was *Nero's* Confident, and the Pandar to his Pleasures, and consequently the cause of the Disorders of his Reign.

To be a good Prince, 'tis not sufficient for him to be only better then one that has been very vicious. *Otho* had liv'd a life so licentious, while he was one of *Nero's* Courtiers, that *Piso*, whose Manners were without reproach, would have thought himself dishonour'd to have made a Parallel between his Deserts, and *Otho's* Vices. On the other side, Sycophants observe this method, that when a Prince is guilty of those Mis-carriages which are abhorr'd by all the World, they still amuse 'em with stories of the Vices of his Predecessors, or of such and such Princes living at the same time; which they aggravate to that degree, that his own seem *Peccadillo's* and Trifles in respect of their Enormities. Whence it comes to pass, that instead of Amendment, he grows Worse. And

therefore if it were true that *Comines* spoke those words to *Lewis XI.* whose Favourite he was, which he repeats in his *Memoire*, we may suspect him to have been as much a Sycophant as any of the Rest.

*Comines*, says *Mezeray*, represents him extremely prudent in Adversity, on that penetrated to a Miracle into the Interests and Thoughts of Men, and then made a dextrous use of 'em to his own ends, ragingly suspicious and jealous of his Power; absolute in his Will; Inexorable; a terrible Oppressor of his Subjects, and yet one of the best Princes of his Time.

Certainly the rest were then most heinous Criminals, or else *Comines* was a great Sycophant. As for what *Piso* said, that *Otho* had a mind to the Empire in the Reign of *Nero*, whose chiefest Confidence he had been, for three or four Years together, thereby we are instructed that Sycophants (for *Otho*, while a private Person, was his Crafts-master in that goodly Calling) are the common Pests of Kingdoms, by reason of the pernicious Counsels which they infuse into the Ears of Princes, which is the reason that *Tacitus* calls 'em the Corrupters of Government, and Pedagogues of Tyranny.

ESSAY LXXXI.

**N**OR was it Judgment or Truth that sway'd their Affections, but according to Custom, licence of Acclamation, and a habit of Flattering any Person whatsoever.

Says D'Ablancourt, *'Tis neither Affection nor Judgment, but Custom and Flattery.* Far short of the Author's sense.

There are very few Princes that are belov'd, or indeed that can escape Irrational and Bruitish Hate: But they are all Flatter'd without exception. For that Flattery never makes its Addresses to the Person, generally the Objects of it will, but to their Fortune which is always ador'd; *Galba* was despis'd because of his Old Age, and hated for his Severity, and his Covetousness: Nevertheless, both People and Grandees could not forbear to Flatter him, while they demanded *Otho's* Life, and the Banishment of all his Accomplices, so long as they thought the

Conspiracy would be crush'd before it got to a head. And when the Report was spread abroad that *Otho* was kill'd, they not only express'd their Joy by public Acclamations and Congratulations, but a great number of the Knights and Senators who thought *Otho* dead, crouded to the Palace to Congratulate him, bemoaning their hard Fortune, that had rescu'd *Otho* from their Revenge. An evident Example to teach us how little trust or heed there is to be given to the fair words or services of Sycophants, and how unwary those Princes are that put their Confidence on such weak and failing Support: They were therefore in the Right, who to encourage *Flavius Salinus* to take up Arms for his Brother *Vespasian* against *Vitellius*, told him, that the People, who seem'd to love *Vitellius*, would change both their Opinions and their Notes, so soon as he should declare himself; and that all the Flatteries, and Acclamations, which the Multitude hollow'd forth to *Vitellius*, would as loudly fill the Fire and Honour of *Vespasian*, so soon as they found the strength of his Party.

## E S S A Y LXXXII.

OF Menaces an undaunted Contemner; impenetrable to Flattery.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Invincible both to Flattery and Fear.*

The greatest part of Princes make a much flouter Resistance against Fear than Flattery. For Menaces provoke their Courage; but Adulation poysons the very Mind, and depraves their Inclinations. *Menaces* waken 'em, soft and soothing *Sycophantry* lulls 'em asleep. And they lend an ear the more willingly to their *Sycophants*, in regard that Complaisance being one of the Properties of Love, they believe themselves to be belov'd by those that please their Humour. *Cabrera* tells us, that *Philip* the Second, King of Spain, had a custom to interrupt his *Sycophants* with this Expression, *Dex ad esso, y de zid lo que importa*: Let this alone, and talk something to the purpose. Words that become the Lips of all Princes, to whom

their Sycophants never prattle other than what is either Prejudicial or Unprofitable. Besides, that if Princes would not listen to their Stories, but only to matters of Importance, Flatterers would have little or nothing then to say.

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## E S S A Y LXXXIII.

**A**LL throng'd in heaps to the Camp, got before the next, strove to out-run the formost, upbraided *Galba*, extoll'd the Soldiers Judgment, kiss'd *Otho's* Hand; and the greater their Dissimulation was, the more was the Bustle and the Ceremony.

*Says D'Ablancourt, Every one made haste before his Companion to get to the Camp, where the Curs'd Galba, applauded the Soldiers, and kiss'd Otho's Hand, redoubling their Caresses, the more feign'd they were.*

What I have already observ'd in the IV. and LXXXI. Articles may serve for an Explanation of this, and therefore



I shall add no more then one single Reflection of *Particulars*, which is, That Flattery is for the most part attended by Treachery. For in regard that Sycophants adore the Fortune only, not the Person of the Prince, they soon exchange their *Person*, when the *Person* exchanges once his Fortune. Witness their Invectives against *Galba*, meerly to reconcile themselves to *Otho*, whose Life they had demanded but some few Hours before, for a Sacrifice to their fury. So that *Tacitus* might well say, that whoever had beheld those Hurries, would never have believ'd but that they had been another Gang of People, and quite another Senate. Which brings to my remembrance what a *Roman* Senator said to *Plancus*, who was Secretary to *Antonius*, who accus'd his Master and his Benefactor of several Crimes, after he had been one of his most obsequious Flatterers. Certainly, said he, *Antonius must have committed a world of wicked Actions, the day before thou leftst him.* Thus it is with Sycophants, while the Prince's Liberality and Favours last, they Deifie him; but when he either grows weary of their Company, or by any Misfortune to be depriv'd of his Grandeur, they are the first

to render and leave his Reputation. So true it is, that all sorts of Friends never believe themselves to be any way concern'd in Gratitude to those who are in Adversity ; or that the Fidelity of those that have receiv'd the greatest Favours, is of any longer permanency then the good Fortune of their Benefactor.

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## ESSAY LXXXIV.

**T**HE Magistrates contend to outvie each other in Adulation : The Fathers flock in haste to the Senate : The Tribunitial Power : The Title of *Augustus*, and all the rest of the Imperial Dignities, are decreed *Otho* ; every one striving to bury in Oblivion the scurrilous Invectives and opprobrious Language that had been promiscuously bestowed upon his Reputation before.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *The Pretor assembl'd the Senate, where the principal Men strive to outvie each other in Submission and Flattery. They bequeath Otho the Tribunitial Authority,*

*Authority, the Title of Augustus, and all the rest of the Imperial Honours, in hopes he might forget the Affront and Injuries he had receiv'd.*

Injuries done to Princes, are always repair'd by excess of Flatteries; and that so much the rather, because that sort of Reparation costs the Sycophants nothing, who have neither Honour nor Shame to expend. And then again, the Dread which terrifie the *Roman* Grandees, lest *Otho* should revenge their former Obloquies, and abusive Scurrility, serves as a Document to Great Personages to keep within the bounds of Decency in season of Turbulency and Disorder, when the Common People let loose the reigns of Vulgar Malice and Contempt. The People are always exempted, by reason of their number. On the other side, the Nobility are always expos'd, by reason of their Wealth, which causes all their Words and Actions to be narrowly scann'd and pry'd into. The People however are over-joy'd when such Ring-leaders once abet, encourage and accompany their Insolence: Tho' indeed, it should be the consideration of Great Personages, that the Favour of the *Mobile*,  
are

are no shelter against a Prince's Resentment. For, to lay a Foundation upon the Multitudes (says Machiavil) is to build upon the Mud.

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## ESSAY LXXXV.

**V***itellius*, among the more prudent and ridgid sort, was thought to be a Man of a poor and pitiful Spirit ; which his Favourers call'd his Affability and Mildness, as being a Person that squander'd away his own, and was no less profuse of other Mens, without either Moderation or Judgment : And thus they interpreted for Vertues, most Egregious Vices, in greedy hopes to Command their Master.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *His readiness to give away both his own and the Estates of other Men, without rule or measure, was look'd upon as Liberality and Generosity, tho' they that censur'd more severely, call'd it his Weakness and Prodigality. But the eager*  
*desire*

*desire of Dominion, made 'em disguise his Vices under Vertuous Appellations.*

Sycophants extol the Vices of Great Men, because it is their Interest to foment and cherish 'em. So that if Princes had not their Vices, at what a loss would Flatterers be, who have only that Sally-Port open to creep into their Favour, and only that same ignominious means to preserve what they have once attain'd? The Younger *Pliny* says, that Princes have no need of Masters to instruct 'em to be wicked; yet let 'em be ne'er so bad, yet they learn many things which else they never would have thought of, had not Sycophants been their Tutors. Nor is there any Vice to which a Prince may be prone, which they more sedulously labour to foster and cherish, then his Luxury and his Prodigality, in regard they are Persons that get the largest share of his Profusions. *Henry III. of France*, was one of the best Princes in the World, but *Francis D'O*, one of his principal Sycophants, and as an addition to the King's Misfortune, *Super-intendent* of his Exchequer, made swift haste to corrupt and vitiate his good Nature. *He was a Person* (says *Dlozeray*) *entirely devoted to*  
*Luxury,*

*Luxury, who every day persuaded the King to make new Edicts, which were called Bursals, and to go to the Parliament, by his Presence to force their Confirmation. And this was one of the chief Causes of the ruine of that Prince, by his losing insensibly that Respect and Affection which the People had for him : Nor did the Heads of the LEAGUE fail to make their advantage of it, by augmenting their Contempt and Aversion to his Person. To which the Insolency of his Favourites did not a little contribute, who acted the parts of more then Sovereign Princes, and dispos'd of all things with an absolute Will and Pleasure.*

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## ESSAY LXXXVI.

**A** Loud shout ensu'd and the Acclamations of the People no less immoderate then dissembl'd : As if they had been pouring forth their Wishes for the Prosperity of *Cæsar the Dictator*, or the Emperor *Augustus* ; with equal strife did they implore the Gods for the Prosperity of his Expedition ; not out of Fear or Love, but an inflam'd desire of Servitude.

Says

Says D'Ablancourt ; *The Oration was receiv'd with great applause, and attended by the feign'd and excessive Praises, as if they had been to honour the Departure of Cæsar Augustus ; and this not for Fear or Affection, but by the instinct of Custom and Flattery.*

I have observ'd in several places, that Flattery and Love are incompatible, and never makes its Addressee but only to the Fortune of Princes. So that altho' *Otho* fell short of *Cæsar's* Worth, or the Merits of *Augustus*, nevertheless the People pay'd him the same Honours which they would have render'd to either of Them, because he was exalted to the same Dignity. For the People measure their Reputation by the present Grandeur of the Prince, and not by his Credit and Reputation, of which they are not capable to judge. They despis'd *Galba*, for that being Old, his Reign could be of no long endurance. On the other side, *Otho*, far inferior to *Galba* for his Parts and Integrity, was reverenc'd because his Youth promis'd a long Reign.

## ESSAY. LXXXVII.

**O***THO* was desirous of Battel : And his Brother *Titianus*, and *Proculus* the Captain of his Guards, as being Persons of little Experience in War urg'd him on ; assuring him that as Fortune, the Gods and *Otho's* Genius were present at his Councils, so would they also assist his Enterprises : A piece of Flattery which they made use of, lest any one should oppose their Advice.

*Otho* (says D'Ablancourt) was willing to give Battel, seconded by his Brother, and the chief of the *Preterium* Courtiers, who spurr'd him on for want of Experience, and cry'd out, That the Gods who had assisted *Otho* in managing the Design, would never abandon him in the execution of it ; adding Flattery to Impatience, lest any one should presume to oppose 'em.

There is no sort of Flattery so bad, as that which precipitates a Prince to the  
rash



rash and over-hasty execution of a Design, where there can be no miscarriage twice committed. In the most Important Affairs of Private Persons, there is always some hope, or something of last remedy, to which he may have recourse; so that a Man with the absolute ruine of himself, may try a second Fortune. But the Affairs of Princes, especially such as are advanc'd of a sudden from a Private Condition to Absolute Dominion, and whose unstable Fortune is still upon the Totter, are subject to so many Accidents, and depend upon so many Circumstances, that the smallest Error is enough to unhinge the whole Frame of their Designs for ever. History furnishes us with a remarkable Example of the Fatality of Sy-cophant Advice in the Person of *Francis Duke of Anjou*, Brother to *Henry III. of France*, who lost *Flanders* and *Brabant* by miscarrying in his Design upon *Antwerp*. They, by whom he was more particularly govern'd (says *Mezeray*) were Persons without Honour or Fidelity, among the rest *Quinsay* his Secretary, *Fervaques*, and *Aurilly* his Son-in-Law, the Son of a Serjeant of *La Terte* near *Blois*, with his Playing upon the Lute, his Voice, his Dancing, and such other Effeminate Qualities, more proper  
for

for the Affection of a Young Lady, then a Great Prince, had rais'd to the highest degree of his Master's Favour. These People keeping him still at defiance with the Duke of Montpensier, and other Men of Honour, spurr'd him on continually to make himself Master of those Towns and Places of which he promis'd them the Government. For the Counsels of Sycophants are always byas'd. And for that reason it is that all Princes, who lay the Foundations of great Designs, ought seriously to deliberate, whether their intended Enterprises will turn to their Honour, and the Benefit of the Public; whether the Execution will be easie; or at least, whether it be not beyond their Strength and their Industry; and, whether they that advize 'em, have Courage and Fidelity enough to venture equal Dangers with 'em and for 'em: For many times they happen to Engage themselves in a War, of which they know not how to make an Honourable end when they have begun it: In regard that if they repent, their coming fairly off is in the power of another. Besides that, their own Authority lessens, as the Reputation of their Generals encreases. Therefore *Tiberius* rather chose to terminate his Differences by Treaty, then by Arms;

Arms; and always conceal'd his Losses upon the Frontiers of the Empire, because he would not be oblig'd to give the Command of his Armies to Persons that might find him work at home. *There is not the same equality of Prosperity and Adversity (said Mucienus to Vespasian) between Thee and Me: For if we Vanquish, I shall enjoy no more Honour, then what thou wilt be willing to confer upon me. But if we fail in our Enterprize, we shall share alike in our Misfortune.* All Generals speak the same words; but when once they become Victors, they change their Language, and many times their pretensions are too excessive, that their Victory would prove a Burthen to the Prince and State, should they be gratify'd to the utmost of their demands. For, according to the saying of *M. de la Rochefoucauld*, 'Tis a difficult thing for a Man to contain himself within the limits of Moderation, after the performance of great Services, which inspire sublimer Thoughts of Rule and Dominion into those that never think their Merits rewarded to the full. Then as to the point of giving Battel (says *Comines*) whoever he be, it is expedient for him to consider, before he hazards his Kingdom upon a Battel; for the loss of a small number of Men, dismays the  
Courages

*Courages of all the rest beyond belief; and instead of terrifying the Enemy, begets a Contempt of the Loser. And some few lines after, Let it be how it will, a Battel lost, draws a large Train behind it, to the prejudice of whoever is vanquish'd. And in another place (speaking of Lewis XI.) The King, said he, whatever could be said or argu'd to the contrary, was resolv'd he would not Fight, as being resolv'd not to venture the Fortune of a Battel. And in my Opinion, he took the most prudent course. To conclude, I shall only add one single Reflexion more, and more remarkable then the former, out of the same Comines, upon another usual piece of Adulation which Flatterers daily insinuate into the ears of Princes, that they should rely upon their own good Fortune, and despise their Enemies. A notable Example, says he, (speaking of Edward IV. King of England, who was driven out of his Kingdom in fifteen days,) for Princes to take notice of, who pretend to be always fearless of their Enemies, and to disdain and scorn an Armed Foe. 'Tis true, the chiefest part of their Courtiers, uphold 'em in their vain Conceits, to please their Humours: And they think they are to be esteem'd and valu'd for it; and that People will applaud 'em for their couragions advice.*

*But*

*But the wiser sort look upon those Rodomontadoes as meer Folly; since it is a vertue to fear with Prudence, and provide against it.*

'Tis a great Treasure for a Prince to have a Wise Man at his Elbow, provided he believe him, and that he have permission to tell him the Truth. For no Person is more likely to Ruine himself, then he that lays aside all Fear, his Security and Confidence being generally the beginning of his Destruction.

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ESSAY LXXXVIII.

**T***itianus* and *Proculus* being overrul'd in their Counsels, betook themselves to the Prerogative of their Generalship.

Says D'Ablancourt, *They seeing that they were vanquish'd by Reason, fled to the Authority and Commands of the Emperour.*

*Otho* had in his Army three, the most Prudent and most Experienc'd Captains of that Age, *Suetonius Paulinus*, *Amnius Gallus*, and *Marius Celsus*, who were all three of a contrary opinion to *Titian*  
and

and *Proculus*, That it was not the safest course to give *Vitellius* Battel; alledging that *Vitellius* had all the reason in the world to be desirous of Combat, and *Otho* to spin out the time in delay; for that the Enemy had all the Force he could make, as not being out of hopes of any Succour from *Gallia*, that began already to totter; nor could they expect any Recruits from the *Rhine*, which would be then expos'd to the Incurfions of the *Barbarians*; that his supplies out of *England* had the Seas to cross, and an Enemy to oppose 'em already; that *Spain* had but few Soldiers. That *Gallia Narbonensis* was sufficiently Infested by *Otho's* Navy, and had not yet forgot the misfortune of their last Engagement: That the Army of *Vitellius* lay enclos'd between the *Po*, and the *Alpes*, without any hopes of Relief by Sea, and could not subsist long in a Country harrafs'd as that had been, by the continual March of so many Legions; that if they could but spin out the War till Summer, the very change of the Climate would bring Diseases among the *Germans*, who were the most hardy Soldiers among all the *Vitellians*; and that many Armies who have driven all before 'em at first, had been forc'd to dissipate  
for

for want of meeting an Enemy to fight with. On the other side, that *Otho* had plenty of all things; that *Pannonia*, *Moesia*, *Dalmatia*, and all the East were at his Devotion, with numerous Succours; and more then all this, that he had *Rome* at his back, the Seat and Rudder of the whole Empire; together with the favour of the Senate, whose Majesty had been always held in Veneration, tho' it might be for a time Ecclips'd; that the Immense Treasures which he had in his Possession, would soon render him Master of the whole; in regard that Money was far more prevalent in a Civil War, then the edge of the Sword; that the Soldiers were accustom'd to the heats of *Italy*: That the River *Po* was a sufficient stop to impend the farther march of the Enemy, upon which he had several Cities well Fortifi'd and Garrisons, which as he found already by the Resistance that *Placencia* had made, would with no less Vigour and Fidelity oppose the Enemy: That therefore his business was to spin out the War, or at least to stay for the fourteenth Legion, so highly esteem'd for their Valour, together with the Forces out of *Moesia*, which were all expected within a few days: That then *Otho*

K

might

might again deliberate what he had to do, and if he thought it his wisest course then to give Battel, he might do it much more to his Advantage, with the Assistance of that new Reinforcement.

These Reasons were so Convincing, that neither *Titianus* nor *Proculus* had any thing to reply. But in regard that *Otho* was so extreamly desirous of Battel, as one that was impatient of Languishing so long between Hope and Fear, both *Titianus* and *Proculus* Flatter'd him to his Destruction, by telling him, that all things would give way to his Fortune. A piece of Sycophantism, that was one of the principal Causes of his Ruine; whereas if they had listen'd to the wholesome Advice of *Paulinus* and his Collegues, *Otho* might have been perswaded to have chang'd his Resolution. But that which is here most observable is this, that *Proculus* (as it is the custome of Favourites, and Sycophants) had not only a particular Antipathy against those three Generals, to whom he was inferiour both in Probity and Understanding, but made it his business to Calumniate, the high Reputation of *Paulinus*, *Celsus's* vigour, and the accomplish'd Experience of *Gal-*  
*lus*; so that being now mistrusted and



and suspected by their Sovereign, they were only Nominal Generals, whose unhappiness and chief perplexity it was, to see their Prudence made a Cloak to cover the Miscarriages and Ignorance of others. A misfortune that happens too often in the Courts of Princes, that suffer themselves to be made a Prey to the passions of their Favourites.

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ESSAY LXXXIX.

**T**HE Death of *Otho* being known, the Senate presently decreed him all those Honours that had been study'd in the longest Reigns of Preceding Princes. A return of Thanks was also order'd to the *German* Armies, and Commissioners were sent likewise to Officiate their Obsequious Congratulations.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Senate heap'd upon the new Emperour all the Honours, which others had obtain'd during a long Reign, and order'd Thanks to the German Legions, with*

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*a Deputation to the Prince, to Congratulate his coming to the Imperial Crown.*

Here are three Things to be observ'd. First, That upon the first intelligence of *Otho's* death, and that the Soldiers had sworn Allegiance to *Vitellius*, at the Instigation of the Governour of the City, the People Crown'd with Flowers and Lawrel Garlands, carry'd the Images of *Galba* round the Temples as it were in Procession; and passing by the place where he had spilt his Blood, they cover'd it with a Pyramid of Garlands, as it were to Erect him a Monument. Which was done to blacken *Otho's* Memory, who had wrested from him both the Empire and his Life; and in Honour to *Vitellius*, who seem'd to be the Avenger of his Death.

The second Thing is, That when Tidings were brought to *Rome* of the Revolt of the *German* Legions, and the Election of *Vitellius* to the Empire, the Senate and People of *Rome* openly declar'd the Calamity of the Commonwealth, which was fallen into the hands of two, the Vilest and most Infamous Persons in the World. Shall we repair to the Temples cry'd they, to offer up our  
Pray

Prayers for *Otho* or *Vitellius*? Certainly, most Impious and Detestable will be our Devotions, either for the one or the other of those two Rivals, of which two whoever proves the Victor, will be still the worser. Nevertheless the same Senate and People that Curs'd *Otho* and *Vitellius*, as two Subjects fatally elected the Ruine of the Empire, now decreed to *Vitellius* those Honours which were never given to *Augustus* himself. So strangely do Sycophants and Flatterers differ from themselves, and so subject are they like Bulrushes, to bend with every wind of the Court.

A third Remark is this, That when the two Armies that had Proclaim'd these two Emperours, came to understand how unfit they were to manage so high an Employment, and consequently began to repent of the bad Choice they had made so much to their Dishonour, presently some time before *Otho's* death, they fell to deliberate Considerations about a Reconciliation one among another, for the Election of an Emperour to the general Satisfaction, and to restore Peace and Concord to the Empire. For the Senate therefore to give] the *German* Legions thanks for the Choice which they had

made of *Vitellius*, the Scorn and Contempt of Mankind, was one of the poorest and meanest Condescensions imaginable. And thus you see there is nothing so vile and abject, which Flattery will not stoop to.

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## ESSAY XC.

**B**UT when the Army importun'd him to honour with the Dignity of Knighthood his Enfranchiz'd Vassal *Asiaticus*, he reprov'd their Immodest Flattery.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *But upon the request of the Army, to make his Enfranchiz'd Slave a Knight of Rome, he put a stop to their Flattery.*

'Tis one of the meanest and the lowest condescensions of Flatterers, to seek to ingratiate themselves with the Prince, by soliciting the Interests and Aggrandizement of such as they know to be their Favourites, tho' Persons of never so base an Extraction, without Merit or Honour. In the Fifty fourth and Fifty fifth Principal-

pal Heads, we have discours'd at large of all the servile Flatteries, to which the Senate stoop'd, while they labor'd to heap up Honours upon the Enfranchiz'd Vassal of *Claudius*. We Courted *Satrius* and *Pomponius* (said a Roman Knight to *Tiberius*) and we held it for an inestimable Honour to be accounted then Enfranchiz'd Slaves and Porters to *Sejanus*. *Mezeray* reports, That the Cardinal Chancellor de Birague, had a greater esteem for one of his *Lacques* that was his Favourite, than for all the Laws of the Kingdom: For it was his saying, That he was not the Kingdoms, but the King's Chancellor. An Expression becoming an Italian Sycophant. As for *Vitellius*, we are to observe, that after he he had refus'd to grant this favour at the request of his whole Army, which was to bestow Gold Rings upon *Asiatics*, and thereby to dignifie him with the Order of Roman Knighthood, yet he conferr'd the Honour upon him afterwards at a great Banquet. So difficult a thing it is for Luxurious Princes to withstand the force of Flattery, and to guard themselves from the insinuating Artifices of certain small Officers that creep into their favour by unwarrantable means, as *Asiaticus* did. Therefore it was the saying of the Youn-

ger *Pliny*, That a Prince who prefers mean and abject People, can be no great Prince himself. And in another place he thus addresses himself to *Trajan*. *Tho' thou bestow'st the marks of thy favour upon thy Enfranchiz'd Vassals, yet they are no other then such as are only convenient for their Quality. Thou form'st 'em so, and hast such an eye over 'em, that they dare not presume to measure themselves by thine, but by their own Fortune.*

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## ESSAY XCI.

**B**Eing heard, they made use of Justifications rather useful then seemly : For they acknowledg'd themselves guilty of Treachery to *Otho*, of their own accords ; as if they had design'd the long march of the Army before the Battel, the Tiring of the *Othonians*, and the Pester-ing the Battalions with Carriages on purpose, and attributed to their own perfidiousness several fortuitous Events, which only Chance produc'd.

There-

Thereupon *Vitellius* seem'd to believe their Perfidie, and absolv'd 'em from the Crime of forfeited Fidelity to *Otho*.

*Paulinus* and *Proculus* (says D'Ablancourt) had Audience, and defended themselves by Excuses not so honest as necessary: For they ascrib'd to their own Cunning the long march of the Army before the Battel, and the encumbrances of the Baggage, with several other accidents of Fortune, to make out their Fidelity to *Vitellius* by a suppos'd Betraying of *Otho*.

Behold an Example of what I have in other places alledg'd, that Flattery is always byass'd by Interest. *Paulinus* and *Proculus* rather chose to be accounted Traytors, then Persons of Honour. Because their Treason was a meritorious act, and advautagious to *Vitellius*, and by consequence secur'd 'em from his Indignation. Another Prince then *Vitellius*, who had no sentiments of Generosity, would have despis'd their Submissions. For if Traytors are odious to themselves, whose Party they embrace, the suppos'd Traytors, that is to say, they who to ingratiate

vitate themselves with the new Prince, falsely accuse themselves to have betray'd his Rival, are no less Treacherous and Criminal than others. And for that reason *Tacitus* tells us, That the Justifications of *Paulinus* and *Proculus*, were rather such as necessity requir'd, than honesty. For, for a Man to boast himself a Traytor, to the Person to whom he had been Faithful in his Life-time, was an open acknowledgment, that he ne'er was faithful, but for his own Interest; and that he only study'd to enrich himself by opportunities of Treachery. For that reason it was, that the Consul *Marius Celsus*, who never stirr'd from *Galba's* Interest, frankly confess'd before *Otho*, that he had always adheard to *Galba's* Fortune; and that if he liv'd longer, he would have serv'd him with an inviolable Fidelity. And that with the same integrity he stuck to *Otho* against *Vitellius*, who nevertheless continu'd him in his Consulship, for which another had offerr'd Money. So highly is fidelity esteem'd by them, that have us'd all their endeavours themselves to vitiate it in another. And therefore *Tiberius* not only acquitted a person that had the courage to acknowledge himself one of *Sejanus's* Friends, and caus'd his  
Accusers



Accusers to be punish'dd with either Death or Exilement. *Augustus* had always a high esteem for *Asinius Pollio*, tho' he ne'er would attend him to the War of *Actium*; in excuse of which he gave him such a reason, as ever after afterwards excus'd him to his favour. *The good Services* (said he) *which I have done for Anthony, are greater then the Benefits which I have receiv'd from Him; but what he has done for me, is better known to the World, then what I did for him: And therefore I leave him to determin your Differences, without declaring for the one or the other, resolving to be a prey to the Victor.*

Thus Men of Courage always abominate whatever has the least Tincture of Treason; whereas Flatterers, who are only the Friends of Fortune, believe themselves disingag'd from all Obligations of Loyalty or Fidelity, to those whom She abandons.

## ESSAY XCII.

**V***itellius* upon the coming of his Brother, and Preceptors of Tyranny creeping into favour, became more lofty and more cruel.

Says D'Ablancourt; *Vitellius became more lofty and more cruel upon the coming of his Brother, and the Courtiers from Rome, who taught him to act the Tyrant. Not to act the Prince, as the Translator erroneously renders it; for Tacitus and the Younger Pliny always oppose Domination to Principality.*

I have already told you in several of the preceding principal Heads, that Sycophants are always of a cruel humor. Which is the reason that Princes who listen to their Charms, cannot choose but be very sanguinary. Nor need we crouds of Examples in this place, to clear what has been sufficiently made out already.

## ESSAY XCIII.

**A**S *Vespasian* came out of the Bed-Chamber, some few Soldiers that waited in the next Room, instead of saluting him, as the Emperor's Lieutenant, bid him *All hail*, by the Title of Emperor. Then crouds of others press'd in, and heap'd upon him the Titles of *Cæsar* and *Augustus*, with all those Appellations belonging to Imperial Sovereignty.

Says D'Ablancourt ; *As he came out of his Chamber, the Soldiers that were upon the Guard, saluted him Emperor ; whose Examples others follow'd, that came running in shoals, and gave him the Names of Cæsar and Augustus, with all those other Titles that are usually given to Emperors themselves.*

What has been said already in the  
4. 26. 44. 77. 14. & 89. Articles, may  
serve

serve as a Commentary sufficient for Explanation of this. I shall here add but only one Reflexion of *Tacitus* himself, That the first Attempts of Men aspiring to Sovereign Dominion, are full of dubious Thoughts, and tottering Resolutions; but when they have once laid violent Hands upon the Throne, they shall not want for Encouragement, Counsel and Assistance.

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## ESSAY XCIV.

**V***espasian* in the Infancy of his Empire, not being so obstinate in Licencing Injustice, till his Indulgent Fortune, and the Flatteries of his Tutors taught him to dare more boldly.

Says D'Ablancourt; *There were nothing but Accusations of the Rich, and Confiscations of Estates; Violences insupportable to the People, but excus'd through the necessity of the War. Nevertheless Vespasian corrupted by his good Fortune, and instructed by his evil Tutors, practic'd the same Oppression in Peace toward the end of his Reign,*  
*notwith-*

notwithstanding his Reserv'dness at the beginning.

Avarice was a Vice predominant in *Vespasian*, Equal but only for that (says *Tacitus*) to the Ancient *Roman* Captains. His Flatterers fomented and cherish'd this same failing of his, which he had some thoughts of reforming at the beginning of his Reign, at which time he carry'd himself with so much Moderation, that it was said of him, That he was the only Private Person advanc'd to Sovereignty, who ever chang'd for the Better. But they that are always at the Elbows of Princes, make it their study to corrupt and enervate their vertuous Intentions by the force of Pleasure, which they strive no less to make habitual to 'em, that so they may have neither leisure, nor any desire to look after the Publick Affairs. If Private Men (says the Younger *Pliny*) change their Manners and their Conduct in so short a time, Princes are more easily allur'd to the same Effects of Human Frailty, how excellent soever their Natural Inclinations may be ; because there are so few that study to cultivate and improve those blooming Excellencies, while all Men rather labour on the other side, out of servile

servile Complaisance, to encourage and augment whatever they discover amiss or irregular in his Disposition. *Francis I.* (says *Mazeray*) had been a most Renowned Prince in all particulars, had he not suffer'd himself sometimes to be led astray by the evil Counsels of his Ministers, who to advance their own Authority, screw'd up his Prerogative beyond the Antient Laws of the Kingdom, to irregular Domination. And that *Henry II.* who was greatly inclin'd to acts of Justice, Was the cause of all the Mischief which they who Govern'd him committed, in regard he never was the absolute Master of himself.

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## ESSAY XCV.

THE Multitude grew burthen-  
som through the vast number of Senators and Knights that throng'd out of the City to meet him, some through Fear, many out of Adulation, the rest, and all by degrees, lest others going, they should remain behind.

*Add to this (says D'Ablancourt) the numerous Train of the Court, always Proud and Insolent ev'n under the best of Princes, all the Senators and Knights, went out to meet him, some in Honour to his Person, others out of Flattery, or for Fear, and all at length, that they might not be seen to remain alone behind.*

The Fourth Article may serve as a sufficient Commentary for this, to which I refer the Reader, to avoid Repetition.

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ESSAY XCVI.

**T**HE next day he made a long Harangue in Commendation of Himself, wherein he extoll'd his Industry and his Temperance with high Encomiums, tho' all that were present had been Eye-witnesses of his Debaucheries, and all *Italy*, through which he had march'd, had seen him notorious for his drousie Luxury and Gluttony. Nevertheless the Vulgar, unable to distinguish between Truth and Falshood, made a hideous noise with

with their Acclamations and Applauses, and clamour'd to him to accept the Title of *Augustus*, which he refus'd.

*The next day, says D'Ablancourt, he made a Harange to the People and Senate, wherein he commended his Industry and his Temperance, as if he had spoken to Strangers, and that all Italy had not been able to resist the contrary. The People however, who are accusom'd to Flattery, void of all Sentiments of Honour, applauded his Impertinences, and forc'd him to assume the Title of Augustus, which he had refus'd.*

When Princes applaud themselves, 'tis a sign they expect to be Extoll'd and Admir'd by those that hear 'em. And Sycophants when they Flatter out of Custom, they never fail to magnifie a bad Prince, who is so vain as to commend himself. Some there are therefore who have stil'd Sycophants the *Eccho of Princes*, and indeed it is a Definition that properly befits 'em; for they always speak whatever the Princes say, and always repeat the Princes own words. *Tacitus* reports that *Caligula* affected as much as in him



him lay, all the Expressions of *Tiberius*; and then when *Nero* sang upon the Theatre, all the Company, but more especially, the Senators and *Roman Ladies* extoll'd his Voice, observing the same Time and Measure in their Acclamations that he kept in Singing.

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ESSAY XC VII.

**B**UT neither had *Aponius* written to him the whole Truth, and his Flattering Sycophants made a more slight Interpretation of his Intelligence, as being only the Mutiny of one Legion, while all the rest of the Armies continued in their Obedience.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The first Intelligence that Vitellius receiv'd of Vespasians Revolt, was from Aponius Saturninus, who sent him word that the first Legion had declar'd for his Enemy. But as one that was himself astonish'd at the Action, he had not given him an account of all the particulars; so that the Emperour's Favorites made*  
slight

*sight of the News, assuring him that it was only thi Revolt of a single Legion, but that all the rest continu'd their Fidelity to Himself.*

This Article is explain'd by the 79. Article, where it is said, That Princes are Flatter'd, even in the most Perillous Conjunctions of their Affairs. So far *Vitellius* was well inform'd, that one Legion was already Revolted, but that other piece of Intelligence, so absolutely necessary for him to have known, was suppress'd, that the Legions of *Egypt*, *Syria*, and *Judea*, had already Elected and Proclaim'd another Emperour. They made him believe, and he himself had divulg'd It among his Soldiers, that there was no fear of a Civil War, and yet at the same time there was one already begun, while the Empire was shar'd between two Emperours. Then he demanded Succours from the *Germans*, the *English* and the *Spaniards*, and yet not one of those Provinces made haste to send him any, in regard that through the pernicious Councils of his Flatterers, he dissembl'd the present necessity of his Affairs. A piece of Dissimulation which *Tacitus* calls Impertinent, while it delays

lays the Remedy instead of putting a stop to the Distemper: 'Tis very probable, that *Portugal* had still been subject to the Crown of *Spain*: if the *Conde D'Olivares*, Chief Minister to *Philip the Fourth*, had had a better Opinion of the Courage of the *Portugueses*; and had put a higher Value upon the Prudence of the *Vice-Queen Margaret* of *Savoy*, Dutches Dowager of *Montona*, who adviſ'd him ſeveral times to diſpel the Tempeſt, which ſhe elle foreſaw would fall upon the *Spaniſh Monarchy*. But the Duke was born to be an Example, that the too great Confidence which the Grand Miniſters of State have of their Abilities and their Fortunes, is moſt commonly the foundation of their Deſtruction; and that God inſatuates the Counſels of Princes, whom He deſigns to puniſh.

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E S S A Y XCVIII.

**V***Itellius* having made an Oration to the Senate full of Pomp and Oſtentation, was applauded with all the moſt exquisite Flatteries which the *Fathers* could deviſe.

Says

Says D'Ablancourt, *He made a most Maguificent Oration to the Senate, which was receiv'd with no less Pompous Adulation.*

There needs no other Explanation of this Text, then what has been already said in the 96. Article.

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## ESSAY XCIX.

**V***Itellius* enquiring the cause of so much Light in a certain Tower, word was brought him that several Persons Supp'd with *Lacina Tuscus*, among whom the most considerable for Honour, was *Junius Blesus*; at what time they that brought the News aggravated much more then it was, the Splendor of the Feast, and the dissolute Riot of the Guests: Nor were there wanting some that accus'd *Tuscus* himself and others, but *Blesus* more hainously, for Debauching so publickly when the Prince was Sick.

Says

Says D'Ablancourt, Vitellius lay very ill in Servilius's Garden; at what time he observ'd a great Company of Lights in a House adjoyning, and demanding the reason, he was told that Tuscus Cecina made a great Entertainment for Junius Blesus, and several others of meaner Condition. Nor did they fail to give him an Account of the Magnificence of the Banquet, and the Excess of their Debauchery, and to blame the Master of the Feast, but more especially Junius Blesus, for Debauching so scandalously when the Emperour lay Sick.

There can be nothing said more perhaps to this Subject, then what Tacitus himself repeats concerning the Death of Blesus.

So soon, says he, as certain of the Courtiers who make it their Business to dive into the secret Jealousies and Disgusts of Princes, perceiv'd that Vitellius was Exasperated, and that Blesus might be made the victim to his Indignation and their Envy, they made their Addresses to Vitellius's Brother, who out of a deprav'd Emulation hated Blesus, whose high Reputation was an Eyesore to a person sully'd with all manner of Infamy, and engag'd him to undertake the Accusation of his Rival. L. Vitellius thereupon entering  
the

the Emperour's Chamber, took his little Son in his Arms, and throwing himself at his brothers Feet, told him that the Trouble he was in, and the Supplications he made him with Tears in his Eyes, proceeded from no other cause, but his real good Wishes for the Welfare of the Emperour and his Children. That his most dangesous Enemy was not Vespasian, whom so many faithful and couragious Legions, and so many Loyal Provinces prevented from approaching Italy; but a Person that Rome fomented in her Bosom, who boasted his Descent from the Family of the Cæsars, and a Branch of the Junius's and Antonius's, and who daily corrupted the Allegiance of the Soldery, by his Trayterous Liberality and Caresses. That all the World lookt upon him as already Emperour, to the contempt of Vitellius, who slighting equally both his Friends and his Enemies, suffer'd the Fortune of a Rival to grow great, who rejoyc'd to behold in the midst of a Luxurious Feast, his Sovereign languishing upon the Bed of Sicknes. And therefore it behov'd him to let him taste the sorrows of a sad and dismal Night for his unseasonable Follity, that he might both understand and feel Vitellius was alive and Emperour, and had a Son too to succeed him.

And

And thus we see how Sycophants envenome the most Innocent Actions of Men, of whom the Prince has once a Jealousie, and spur their Sovereigns on to Cruelty and Tyranny. And this Example of *Blesus* may serve to serve to admonish great Personages, how much it behoves 'em to be careful of themselves, and to 'em understand the Dangers to which their Birth and Fortune expose 'em.

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ESSAY C.

CONTRARY to the Opinions of the most experienc'd of the Centurions who would have frankly given him their Advice, might they have been Consulted. But the Favourites of *Vitellius* would not permit 'em to come near him, besides that the Ears of the Prince were so possess'd, that all things profitable founded harsh, and nothing would be admitted but what was Grateful and Destructive.

Says D'Ablancourt, *Against the Opinion of his most Experienc'd Captains who would have given him their Advice, if he would have requir'd it: But he had been accusom'd for a long time to hear nothing but what was pleasing and prejudicial.*

Sycophants understand so well to possess the Ears of the most part of unwary Princes, that in time they render 'em not much unlike *Vitellius*; there being very few that will endure to hear Truth spoken without Offence. Therefore it was that one of the Ancients resembl'd Sycophants to Thieves, who when they go about to break open a House in the Night time, put out their Candles for fear of being discover'd. For the first thing that Flatterers do in the Courts of Princes, is to remove from about their Persons all Men of sharp and penetrating Apprehensions, though bold and able to give wholesome Advice to their Sovereigns, and discover the Artifices which they make use of, to the prejudice of the deluded Prince. Thus *Nero* became a Prey to his Flatterers, when once they remov'd *Burrhus* and *Seneca* out of their way, who labour'd by consent, and made it their Business to infuse into him Sentiments



ments becomming a Vertuous and Magnanimous Governour.

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ESSAY. CI.

**B**UT Envy lay conceal'd, and Adulation practiz'd openly.

Says D'Ablancourt, *The Senate conceal'd their Sentiments, as well of Hatred as Envy, only their Flattery shew'd it self openly.*

Observe here in two words, the Portraiture of the Court, where Hatred lurks in the Heart, while the Lips of Men are full of Adulation. The Chief Ministers who ever they be, are still Flatter'd by reason of their high Advancement, but Envy'd always by reason of their Power. It being the Custom of Men to behold with murmuring and repining, Superiour Authority in the hands of those that have been their Equals. *Mucianus* having written to the Senate, the Senate murmur'd in their Private Cabals. *If Mucianus be a private Person, cry'd they, why does he Write like a public Minister? Had he had any thing to say to*

as, he might as well have stay'd till his Return to Rome, at what time he might have propos'd it himself in the Senate. But when they were met in a Body, then they strove who should most applaud what they had condemn'd in private, even to the decreeing Triumphal Ornaments to *Mucianus* for a Civil War, which he had kindl'd by inciting *Vespasian* to Revolt against *Vitellius*. And this that the Senate acted at Rome in respect of *Mucianus*, is no more then what is daily Practiz'd in all the Courts of the World, where the Chief Ministers and Favourites hear nothing but Encomiums of themselves, because all People fawn upon their present Fortune. But they are much deceiv'd who judge by their own Ears, of the inward Sentiments of their outward Adorers.

ESSAY CII.

**A** Certain Person known to have been long Blind, imploring with Tears the Cure of his Blindness, besought the Prince to rub his Cheeks and the Balls of his Eyes with the Excrement of his Mouth. Another lame of his Hand, begg'd the favour that *Cæsar* would vouchsafe to Tread upon him with his Feet. *Vespasian* at first refus'd and laugh'd at the Petitions of both, as fearing the vain Issue of such an attempt; till tyr'd with the Supplications of the Afflicted People, and the Encouragements of his Adulators, he was induc'd to have a better Conceit of himself.

Says D'Ablancourt, *One that was Blind and well known by the People, besought him to rub his Eyes with his Spittle, as being the only means to recover his Sight; and another that was lame of one Hand, implor'd him*

likewise but only to touch the part Affected with the sole of his Foot. The Emperour rejected both their Sollicitations at first with Scorn and Laughter, till press'd by their continual Importunities, he enquir'd of the Physitians whether such a thing were possible to be done, waving between the Flatteries of his Courtiers, and the fear of rendring himself Ridiculous.

Tacitus makes the Commentary upon this place himself. Vespasian, says he, Commanded the Physitians to consult among themselves, whether Humane Remedies could surmount the Nature of those two Infirmities. The Physitians after they had argu'd the Point, concluded, that the Blind Man not having as yet quite lost his visual Faculty, the sight of his Eye not being utterly Corroded away, his sight might be restor'd, provided the Impediments were remov'd: And that the other's Hand might be recover'd, so that the Nerves that were shrunk, could be mollifi'd and stretch'd out to ther natural use: That the Gods perhaps made choice of him to effect this great Miracle: Moreover, that the Glory of the Cure would redound to his Immortal Honour, whereas if it did not succeed, all the Laughter and Derision of the Cure in vain attempted, would fall upon the  
Cre-

*Credulity of those 'unfortunate Persons. Vespasian therefore believing all things would submit to his Fortune, with a chearful Air went on, and condescended to their Supplications.*

Thus Princes at first withstand the Corruptions of Flattery, but sooner or later suffer themselves to be Vanquish'd by its Temptations. They may be Modest, Prudent, Constant, Resolute, Politic, and Judicious, yet Flattery always finds a way to steal into their Affections, and supplant those Vertues which she meets with in their Inclinations.

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ESSAY CIII.

**W**Hen Domitian read *Agri-*  
*cola's* Will, wherein he left  
him Coheir with the best of Wives,  
and a most Pious Daughter, he re-  
joyc'd at it were to find so great an  
Honour done his Brother by so judi-  
cious a Person. So blinded and cor-  
rupted was his Judgment by conti-  
nual Adulations, as not to discern  
that a Vertuous Father never left a  
Prince.

Prince his Heir, unless he were a bad one.

Says D'Ablancourt, *When Domitian read Agricola's last Will and Testament, and saw that he had left him his Heir together with his Wife and Daughter, he took it for an Honour; being so Infatuated by Flattery, as not to apprehend that a bad Prince was never the Heir to one that was Vertuous.*

Princes that have a Kindness for Sycophants, are soon mistaken in their Judgments, while thet'other make use of all their Art and Cunning, to disguise the Truth of things. Self-love it is indeed that blinds the greatest part of Men. But they have a Remedy which Princes want, in regard that either their Superiours or their Equals, are not afraid to tell 'em Truth, which is an easie step to Reformation; whereas Princes having neither Superiours nor Companions, unless they please themselves; all the World studies to please or rather to misguide 'em. Whence it comes to pass that they delight in many things, which they would shun as the  
Rocks

Rocks of their Reputation, and as eternal Stains upon their Memories, had they but Faithful and Uninterrested Friends, who had the Courage to discover what their Sycophants conceal from their Knowledge. I wish to Heaven this little Treatise may prove acceptable to others as perhaps it may be unpleasing to them, who raise their Fortunes by Adulation.

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*FINIS.*

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The first of these is the  
fact that the British  
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